A

COLLECTION

OF

MISCELLANIES:

CONSISTING OF

POEMS, ESSAYS,

DISCOURSES and LETTERS,

Occaſionally Written.

Anthony Capron 1785.

By *JOHN NORRIS*, M. A.

Late Rector of *Bemerton*, near *Sarum*.

Carefully reviſed, corrected, and improved by the Author.

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ADVERTISEMENT from the Author to the Reader.

AS it cannot be thought ſtrange, that having by this Edition an opportunity of reviſing this Book, I ſhould comply with it; ſo neither can it, that when I did ſo, I ſhould find many things in it, (being a juvenile compoſition) which my now riper, and as I preſume better judgment, cannot ſo well approve of. I have indeed found many things that were not as they ſhould be; ſome as to notion, ſome as to fact; and ſome as to manner of expreſſion; and accordingly what I have obſerv'd of this kind, at leaſt in the moſt conſiderable inſtances, I have endeavour'd to rectifie, leaving out what was incorrigible, and making ſome improvements up and down as occaſion offered: And though I cannot ſay it is now ſo correct as if it were the preſent production of my pen, yet I think is indifferently ſo. And accordingly, this Edition is the Edition which I would commend to poſterity, not owning the former, any farther than they agree with this. In

like manner as St. Auſtin *ſays of his imperfect Book upon* Geneſis, *written when he was young, which he would have meaſured by what he wrote afterwards upon the ſame ſubject, when he was a Biſhop.* Breviter admoneo ut illi duodecem libri legantur, quos longe poſtea Epiſcopus feci, & ex ipſis de iſto judicetur. *The ſame with due accommodation ſay I here, deſigning as I have opportunity, to reviſe my other writings, and to correct what is amiſs in them: In the mean while, all that I have farther to ſay upon this occaſion is, that if there be any thing in the verſe part, that ſhall appear offenſive in ſtrictneſs of notion, as perhaps there may, this line in particular,*

But ſure he coveted to have thee there.

I would not have it taken as offered for theological or phyloſophick truth, but only as a ſtroke of Poetry, which with equitable Readers I hope will find allowance.

TO

TO THE
READER.

OF all the tedious things in the world, I was ever the leaſt friend to long Prefaces; and therfore I ſhall only commend to your hands this Collection of Miſcellanies, occaſionally compoſed at ſeveral times, as my humour and leiſure ſerv'd me, with a brief account of my deſign, as to both parts of the Collection.

Not to trouble you with a pompous diſcourſe of the nature of Poetry, its meaſures of Criticiſm, its variety, antiquity, its great uſe and excellence, and the like, which have been at large ſet forth by many curious pens; I have only leiſure at preſent to obſerve, that Poetry is of late mightily fall'n from the beauty of its idea, and from its ancient majeſty and grandeur, as well as credit and reputation.

It may appear ſtrange indeed, that in ſuch a refining age as this, wherein all things ſeem ready to receive their laſt turn and finiſhing ſtroke, Poetry ſhould be the only thing that remains unimprov'd. And yet ſo it happens, that which we generally have now a-days, is no more like the thing it was formerly, than modern religion is like primitive chriſtianity.

'Tis with this as with our Muſick. From grave majeſtick, ſolemn ſtrains, where deep inſtructive

ſenſe is ſweetly convey'd in charming numbers, where equal addreſs is made to the judgment and the imagination, and where beauty and ſtrength go hand in hand; 'tis now for the moſt part dwindled down to light, frothy ſtuff, conſiſting either of mad, extravagant rants, or ſlight witticiſms, and little amorous conceits, fit only for a Tavern entertainment; and that too among Readers of a *Dutch* palate.

The truth is, this moſt excellent and divine art has of late been ſo cheapned and depretiated by the bungling performances of ſome who thought themſelves inſpired, and whoſe readers too have been more kind to them than their planets, that Poetry is almoſt grown out of repute; and men come ſtrongly prejudiced againſt any thing of this kind, as expecting nothing but froth and emptineſs; and to be a Poet, goes for little more than a Countrey Fidler.

But certainly he had once another character, and that in as nice and wiſe an age as this. If we may believe the great *Horace* he was one,

—Cui mens divinior, atque os
Magna locuturum—

He had then his Temple ſurrounded with a divine glory, ſpoke like the Oracle of the God of Wiſdom, and could deſcribe no Hero greater than himſelf. Poetry was once the miſtreſs of all the arts in the circle, that which held the reins of the world in her hand, and which gave the firſt, and (if we may judge by the effects) perhaps the beſt inſtitutes for the moralizing and governing the paſſions of mankind.

The deſign therefore of the preſent undertaking, is to reſtore the declining genius of Poetry to its pri-

primitive and genuine greatneſs. to wind up the ſtrings of the Muſes lyre, and to ſhew that ſenſe and gracefulneſs are as conſiſtent in theſe as in any other compoſitions. I deſign here all the maſculine ſenſe and argument of a diſſertation, with the advantage of poetick fineneſs, beauty and ſpirit; and accordingly I have made choice for the moſt part of divine and moral ſubjects; and if I meddle with any other ſort, I commonly turn the ſtream another way, as particularly in thoſe two Poems call'd Beauty and Love, which I have reſcued from thoſe ſordid abuſes they have hitherto ſuffer'd.

I confeſs 'tis a difficult province to make ſubſtantial maſſy ſenſe yield to the ſoftneſs of Poetry; and accordingly we find there are few Poems after the divine and moral way, but what are ſtiff, flat and inſipid; but without this mixture, Poetry is nothing worth; and when it has it, it has all it can have, and is withal ſo divine a thing, that even *Plato*, I fancy, would give it entertainment in his Commonwealth.

I need not make any other apology for my converſing with the Muſes; for I do not think it an employment beneath the character of a ſcholar; and tho' I have, in a manner, now ſet up my outmoſt pillar, yet I can't find in my heart to repent me of thoſe few blank hours beſtow'd in this exerciſe. For I have the example of ſome of the greateſt and wiſeſt in all ages to warrant me; and the greatneſs of *Solomon* is ſeen as much in his divine paſtoral, the *Canticles*, as in his *Proverbs* or *Sermons*; and the wiſe *Ben-Sirach*, among other characters of his Heroes, puts in this among the

reſt, that they were *ſuch as found out muſical tunes, and recited verſes in writing*, Eccles. xliv. 5.

And thus much for the verſe part. Concerning the Eſſays and Diſcourſes, I have only this to ſay, that I deſign'd in them as much brevity and clearneſs as are conſiſtent with each other, and to abound in ſenſe rather than words: I wiſh all men would obſerve this in their writings more than they do. I'm ſure the multitude of books, and the ſhortneſs of life require it; and ſenſe will lye in a little compaſs, if men would be perſuaded to vent no notions but what they are maſters of; and were Angels to write, I fancy we ſhould have but few Folio's

This is what I deſign'd and endeavour'd in the whole. Whether I have attain'd it or no, I ſubmit to the judgment of the candid and indifferent Reader.

All Souls Coll.
June 1. 1687.

J. NORRIS

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The Paſſion of our BLESSED SAVIOUR, repreſented in a Pindarique Ode.

---------Quis talia fando
Temperet a lachrymis ?------

I.

SAY, bold licentious Muſe,
What noble ſubject wilt thou chuſe ;
Of what great Hero, of what mighty thing,
Wilt thou in boundleſs numbers ſing ?
Sing the unfathom'd depths of love,
(For who the wonders done by love can tell,
By love, which is it ſelf all miracle ?)
Here in vaſt endleſs circles may'ſt thou rove,
And like the travelling planet of the day
In an orb unbounded ſtray.
Sing the great miracle of love divine,
Great be thy genius, ſparkling every line,
Love's greateſt myſtery rehearſe :
Greater than that,
Which on the teeming Chaos brooding ſate,
And hatch'd with kindly heat, the Univerſe.
How God in mercy choſe to bleed, and dye,
To reſcue man from miſery :
Man, not his creature only, but his enemy.

II. Lo,

II.

Lo, in *Gethſemane*, I ſee him proſtrate lye,
Preſs'd with the weight of his great agony.
The common ſluces of the eyes
To vent his mighty Paſſion won't ſuffice,
His tortured body weeps all o'er,
And out of every pore
Buds forth a precious gem of purple gore.
How ſtrange the power of afflictions rod
When in the hand of an incenſed God!
Like the commanding wand
In *Moſes's* hand,
It works a miracle, and turns the flood
Of tears into a Sea of blood.
See with what pomp ſorrow does now appear!
How proud ſhe is of being ſeated here!
She never wore
So rich a dye before.
Long was he willing to decline
Th' encounter of the wrath divine.
Thrice he ſent for his releaſe
Pathetick embaſſies of peace:
At length, his courage overcame his doubt,
Reſolv'd he was, and ſo the bloody flag hung out.

III.

And now the tragick ſcene's diſplay'd,
Where drawn in full Battalia are laid
Before his eyes,
That numerous hoſt of miſeries
He muſt withſtand, that map of woe
Which he muſt undergo.
That heavy wine-preſs which muſt by him be trod,
The whole artillery of God.
He ſaw that face, whoſe very ſight
Chears Angels with its beatifick light,
Contracted now into a dreadful frown,

All

All cloath'd with thunder, big with death
And ſhowers of hot burning wrath,
Which ſhortly muſt be poured down.
He ſaw a black and diſmal ſcroll,
Of ſins paſt, preſent, and to come,
With their intolerable doom,
Which would the more oppreſs his ſpotleſs ſoul;
As th' elements are weighty proved,
When from their native ſtation they're removed.
He ſaw the foul ingratitude of thoſe,
Who would the labours of his love oppoſe;
And reap no benefit by all his agonies.
He ſaw all this,
And as he ſaw, to waver he began,
And almoſt to repent of his great love for man.

IV.

When lo, a heavenly form all bright and fair,
Swifter than thought, ſhot thro' th' enlighten'd air.
He who ſat next th' imperial throne,
And read the counſels of the great Three-one,
Who in Eternity's myſterious glaſs,
Saw both what was, what is, and what muſt come
He came with reverence profound, [to paſs;
And rais'd his proſtrate Maker from the ground;
Wiped off the bloody ſweat
With which his face and garments too were wet:
And comforted his dark benighted mind,
With ſovereign cordials of light refin'd.
This done, in ſoft addreſſes he began
To fortifie his kind deſigns for man:
Unſeal'd to him the book of God's decree,
And ſhew'd him what muſt be:
Alledg'd the truth of propheſies,
Types, figures, and myſteries;
How needful it was to ſupply,
With humane race, the ruins of the Sky.

How

How this would new acceſſion bring
To the celeſtial quire;
And how withal, it would inſpire
New matter for the praiſe of the great King.
How he ſhould ſee the travail of his ſoul, and bleſs
Thoſe ſufferings, which had ſo good ſucceſs.
How great the triumphs of his victory,
How glorious his aſcent would be,
What weighty bliſs in Heaven he ſhould obtain
By a few hours of pain;
Where to eternal ages he ſhould reign.
He ſpake, confirm'd in mind the Champion ſtood;
A Spirit divine
Through the thick veil of fleſh did ſhine:
All-over powerful he was, all-over good.
Pleas'd with his ſucceſsful flight,
The officious Angel poſts away
To the bright regions of eternal day;
Departing in a track of light.
In haſte for news, the heavenly people ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful ſtate of man.

V.

And now that ſtrange prodigious hour,
When God muſt ſubject be to humane power;
That hour is come,
The unerring clock of fate has ſtruck;
'Twas heard below down to Hell's loweſt room,
And ſtrait th' infernal powers th' appointed ſignal took.
Open the ſcene, my Muſe, and ſee
Wonders of impudence and villany;
How wicked mercenary hands,
Dare to invade him whom they ſhould adore;
With ſwords and ſtaves, encompaſs'd round he ſtands,
Who knew no other guards but thoſe of Heaven before.

Once

Once with his powerful breath he did repel
The rude assaults of Hell.
A ray of his divinity
Shot forth with that bold answer, I am He:
They reel and stagger, and fall to the ground;
For God was in the sound.
The voice of God was once again,
Walking in the garden, heard:
And once again, was by the guilty hearers fear'd:
Trembling seiz'd every joint, and chilness every vein.
This little victory he won,
Shew'd what he could have done.
But he to whom as chief was given,
The whole militia of Heaven,
That mighty he,
Declines all guards for his defence,
But that of his inseparable innocence;
And quietly gives up his liberty.
He's seiz'd on by the military bands,
With cords they bind his sacred hands:
But ah! how weak, what nothings would they prove,
Were he not held by stronger ones of love.

VI.

Once more, my weary'd Muse, thy pinions try,
And reach the top of *Calvary*.
A steep ascent: But most to him who bore
The burthen of a Cross this way before.
(The Cross ascends, there's something in it sure
That moral is and mystical;
No heights of fortune are from thee secure,
Afflictions sometimes climb, as well as fall.)
Here breathe a while and view
The dolefull'st picture sorrow ever drew:
The Lord of life, Heaven's darling Son,
The great, th' Almighty one,

With out-ſtretch'd arms, nail'd to a curſed tree,
Crown'd with ſharp thorns, cover'd with infamy:
He who before
So many miracles had done,
The lives of others to reſtore,
Does with a greater, loſe his own.
Full three long hours his tender body did ſuſtain,
Moſt exquiſite and poignant pain.
So long the ſympathizing Sun his light withdrew,
And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could [view.

VII.

This ſtrange defect of light,
Does all the ſages in Aſtronomy affright,
With fears of an eternal night.
Th' intelligences in their courſes ſtray,
And travellers below miſtake their way;
Wond'ring to be benighted in the midſt of day.
Each mind is ſeiz'd with horror and deſpair,
And more o'erſpread with darkneſs than the air.
Fear on, 'tis wondrous all, and new;
'Tis what paſt ages never knew.
Fear on, but yet you'll find,
The great Eclipſe is ſtill behind.
The luſtre of the face divine,
Does on the mighty ſufferer no longer ſhine.
God hides his Glories from his ſight,
With a thick skreen made of Hell's groſſeſt night.
Cloſe-wrought it was, and ſolid, all
Compacted and ſubſtantial;
Impenetrable to the beatifick Light:
Without complaint, he bore
The tortures he endur'd before;
But now, no longer able to contain,
Under the great hyperbole of pain,
He mourns, and with a ſtrong pathetick cry,
Laments the ſad deſertion of the Deity.

Here

Here ſtop, my Muſe, ſtop and admire,
The Breather of all Life does now expire:
His milder Father ſummons him away;
His breath obediently he does reſign:
Angels to Paradiſe his ſoul convey;
And calm the relicks of his grief with hymns divine.

ANNOTATIONS.

THIS Ode is after the Pindarick way; which is the higheſt and moſt magnificent kind of writing in verſe; and conſequently fit only for great and noble ſubjects; ſuch as are as boundleſs as its own numbers: The nature of which is to be looſe and free; and not to keep one ſettled pace; but ſometimes like a gentle ſtream, to glide along peaceably within its own channel; and ſometimes, like an impetuous torrent, to roll on extravagantly, and carry all before it. Agreeable to that deſcription of *Horace:*

Nunc pace delabentis Hetruſcum
In mare, nunc lapides adeſos,
Stirpeſque raptas & pecus & domos
Volventis una, non ſine montium
Clamore vicinæque ſylvæ.

And this may ſerve to explain the introduction of the Poem.

And hatch'd with kindly heat the Univerſe.

Love, in the gentile Theology, as a certain writer obſerves, is made the moſt antient of the Gods, and the Sire of all things. Agreeably to what *Plutarch*, as he ſays, tells us, that for this reaſon *Heſiod* made Love the moſt antient of the Gods, ἵνα πάντα δι' ἐκεῖνον μεταλάβῃ γενέσεως. And it is deſcribed,

 bed,

bed, he ſays, by *Simmias Rhodius*, in a pair of wings; which ſuited well with the ſymbolical repreſentation of the Chaos by an Egg, which was brooded and hatch'd under theſe wings of Love. To which alſo *Ariſtophanes*, as he notes, in ſome meaſure alludes in his Coſmogony. The plain and undiſguiſed meaning of all which is this; That the creation of the world was the effect of the divine Love. The end which God had in it being not the acquiſition of any good to himſelf, but only the communication of his own goodneſs and happineſs. According to that of St. *Auſtin*, *Quæ non ex indigentia feciſti, ſed ex plenitudine bonitatis tuæ.* Confeſ. lib. 13. c. 4.

As th' elements are weighty proved,
When from their native ſtation they're removed.

This is according to the *Ariſtotelian* hypotheſis, that the elements are not heavy in their own places; which whether it be true or no, I ſhall not now diſpute. However, it ſerves for an illuſtration, which is ſufficient for my preſent purpoſe.

He ſaw the foul ingratitude of thoſe, &c.

The bitter ingredients of our Lord's cup mention'd hitherto, were taken from things relating to his own perſonal concern. But this laſt motive of his ſorrow, proceeds wholly on the behalf of others; of whoſe final impenitence he is ſuppoſed to have a foreſight. This I take to be a good and proper inſinuation of the excellency of our Bleſſed Lord's temper, his exceeding great Love and Philanthropy, when among the other ingredients of his Paſſion this is ſuppoſed to be one, That there would be ſome, who, by their own default, would receive no benefit from it.

Unſeal'd

Unſeal'd to him the book of God's decree, &c.
Whether the Angel uſed theſe topicks of conſolation or no, is a thing as indifferent to my purpoſe, as 'tis uncertain. In the Scripture it is only ſaid in general, That *there appeared an Angel from Heaven ſtrengthning him.* However, theſe arguments are ſuch as are probable and pertinent ; and that's ſufficient.

In haſte for news the heavenly people ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful ſtate of man.
It is highly reaſonable to believe, that thoſe bleſſed and excellent Spirits, who out of their compaſſionate love and concern for mankind, uſhered in the news of our Saviour's Nativity, with Anthems of praiſe and thankſgiving; and are ſaid likewiſe to rejoice at the converſion of a ſinner ; were alſo mightily tranſported with joy, when they underſtood that our Saviour, notwithſtanding the reluctancy of innocent nature, was at length fully reſolved to undertake the price of our Redemption.

Full three long hours his tender body did ſuſtain,
Moſt exquiſite and poignant pain.
It is obſerved to have been the opinion of the antient Fathers, that the ſufferings which our Bleſſed Saviour underwent in his body, were more afflictive to him than the ſame would have been to another man, upon the account of the excellency and quickneſs of his ſenſe of feeling : And this opinion I take to be as reaſonable, as 'tis pious. For ſince, according to the principles of Philoſophy, the ſenſe of feeling ariſes from the proportion of the firſt qualities ; it follows, that the better the complexion or temperament of any man

is, the better his feeling muſt needs be. Now 'tis very reaſonable to believe, that that man who was to be ſubſtantially united to the Godhead, and who was begotten by the miraculous overſhadowings of the Holy Spirit, ſhould have a body endow'd with the beſt complexion, and moſt noble harmony of qualities that could be, that ſo it might be a ſuitable organ for his excellent ſoul. And if ſo, then it follows, that the fleſh of our Lord's body was ſo ſoft and tender, and his feeling ſo exquiſitely quick and ſenſible, as never any man's was before: And conſequently, the ſevere uſages which he underwent, not only at his Paſſion, but throughout his whole life, muſt needs be in a ſingular manner afflictive to him. And hence appears the vanity of their opinion, who are little or nothing affected with the conſideration of our Lord's Paſſion, becauſe they think it was made light to him, by reaſon of his union with the Godhead. 'Twas eaſy for him (ſome inconſiderate perſons are ready to ſay) to ſuffer this, or this; for he was God, and not mere man, as we are. True, he was ſo; but his being God did no way leſſen the puniſhment he underwent as man, but only ſupported him in his Exiſtence under it, in the ſame manner as God is ſuppoſed, by an act of his Almighty power, to preſerve the bodies of the damn'd, incorruptible among the everlaſting burnings. But this I think is no kindneſs to them. Neither did the ſociety of the divine nature any more diminiſh the ſufferings of our deareſt Lord; nay, in one reſpect, it proved an accidental aggravation to them, becauſe upon the account of this noble union, he had given him a body of a moſt admirable complexion and harmonious temperature, and conſequently of a fleſh exceeding tender,

der, and moſt exquiſitely perceptive of the leaſt impreſſions.

So long the ſympathizing Sun his light withdrew,
And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could view.

The Eclipſe which accompany'd the Paſſion of our Saviour was ſo remarkable and miraculous, that 'twas taken notice of by the Gentile hiſtorians. There are three things which made this Eclipſe ſo very remarkable; the time of its appearance; the time of its duration; and the degree of it. 1. For the time of its appearance; it was at full Moon, when the Moon was not in conjunction with, but in oppoſition to the Sun. And this appears not only from the teſtimony of *Dionyſius*, who is obſerved to affirm, that he ſaw it at that time, but alſo from the time of our Lord's Paſſion, which, according to the relation of the Evangeliſt, was at the celebration of the Paſſover. Now the *Jews* were bound to celebrate the Paſchal ſolemnity always at full Moon; as is to be ſeen in the twelfth of *Exodus*. This was no time therefore for a natural Eclipſe, becauſe 'twas impoſſible that the Moon ſhould then interpoſe betwixt us and the Sun. 2. For the time of its duration; it was full three hours; which is another Evidence that this was no natural Eclipſe: For the natural Eclipſe of the Sun can never laſt ſo long, both becauſe of the great diſproportion between the Sun's magnitude, and that of the Moon, and becauſe of the ſwift motion of the latter. 3. For the degree of it, it was a total Eclipſe. The Sun was ſo darkned, that (as an eminent hiſtorian is ſaid to report, writing of that Eclipſe) the Stars appear'd. And that is another argument that it was no natu-

ral Phænomenon, it being impoſſible that the body of the Moon, which is ſo infinitely leſs than that of the Sun, ſhould totally eclipſe it. Now all theſe three remarkables are compriſed in the compaſs of theſe two verſes. For in that it is ſaid, that the Sun withdrew his light, it is intimated that the light of the Sun was not intercepted by the ordinary conjunction of the Moon, but that by an extraordinary commiſſion from the God of nature, the Sun rein'd in his light, and ſuſpended the emiſſion of his beams. And this denotes the time of its appearance, (*viz.*) when the Moon was not in conjunction. The time of its duration is implied by the words, *ſo long*. And laſtly, the degree of it is implied in the laſt verſe, where the appearance of the Stars is not directly expreſs'd, but only inſinuated and couch'd, for the more elegancy of the thought.

And calm the relicks of his grief with Hymns divine.

It is here ſuppoſed, that the Paſſion of our Saviour was now over, and his Father's wrath wholly appeas'd. For whatever becomes of the doctrine of Chriſt's local deſcent into Hell, concerning which I am not minded at preſent to move any diſpute, I cannot think that he went thither, there to ſuffer any torment or puniſhment. His own words upon the Croſs, *It is finiſh'd*, do apparently contradict it. But yet, though the bitter cup was wholly drank off upon the Croſs, 'tis natural to imagine ſome little reliſh of it to remain behind for a time. Though all his ſufferings and penal inflictions were ended before his death, yet, I ſuppoſe, (and I think very naturally) ſome little diſcompoſures of mind, remaining like the after-droppings of a ſhower, which

which his ſoul could not immediately ſhake off, upon her releaſe from the body. In alluſion to that of *Virgil*,

Inter quas Phœniſſa recens a vulnere Dido,
Errabat ſylva in magna-----

Where the Poet fancies the ghoſt of *Dido* being newly releas'd from the pains of love, could not preſently forget her ſhady walks and melancholy retirements: Now theſe remains of ſorrow and after-diſturbances of mind which cleav'd to the ſoul of the holy Jeſus, I ſuppoſe here to be allay'd by the muſick of Angels in his paſſage to Paradiſe.

An HYMN *upon the* TRANSFIGURATION.

I.

HAIL, King of glory, clad in robes of light,
Out-ſhining all we here call bright:
Hail, light's divineſt Galaxy,
Hail, expreſs image of the Deity.
Could now thy amorous ſpouſe thy beauties view,
How would her wounds all bleed a-new!
Lovely thou art all o'er and bright,
Thou *Iſrael*'s glory, and thou *Gentile*'s light.

II.

But whence this brightneſs, whence this ſuddain day?
Who did thee thus with light array?
Did thy Divinity diſpenſe
T' its conſort a more liberal influence?
Or did ſome curious Angel's chymick art
The ſpirits of pureſt light impart,
Drawn from the native ſpring of day,
And wrought into an organized ray?

III.

III.

Howe're 'twas done, 'tis glorious and divine,
Thou doſt with radiant wonders ſhine.
The Sun with his bright company,
Are all groſs meteors if compar'd to thee.
Thou art the fountain whence their light does flow,
But to thy Will thine own doſt owe.
For (as at firſt) thou didſt but ſay,
Let there be light, and ſtrait ſprang forth this wond'rous day.

IV.

Let now the *Eaſtern* Princes come and bring
Their tributary offering.
There needs no Star to guide their flight,
They'll find thee now, great King, by thine own light.
And thou, my ſoul, adore, love, and admire,
And follow this bright guide of fire.
Do thou thy Hymns and praiſes bring,
Whilſt Angels with veil'd faces, Anthems ſing.

The PARTING

I.

DEpart! The ſentence of the damn'd I hear;
Compendious grief, and black deſpair.
I now believe the Schools with eaſe,
(Tho' once an happy Infidel)
That ſhould the ſenſe no torment ſeize,
Yet pain of loſs alone would make a Hell.

II.

Take all, ſince me of this you Gods deprive,
'Tis hardly now worth while to live.
Nought in exchange can grateful prove,
No ſecond friendſhip can be found
To match my mourning widow'd love;
Eden is loſt, the reſt's but common ground.

III.

III.

Why are the greateſt bleſſings ſent in vain;
Which muſt be loſt with greater pain?
Or why do we fondly admire
The greateſt good which life can boaſt?
When fate will have the bliſs expire,
Like life, with painful agonies 'tis loſt.

IV.

How fading are the joys we dote upon,
Like apparitions ſeen and gone:
But thoſe which ſooneſt take their flight,
Are the moſt exquiſite and ſtrong.
Like Angels viſits, ſhort and bright;
Mortality's too weak to bear them long.

V.

No pleaſure certainly is ſo divine,
As when two ſouls in love combine:
He has the ſubſtance of all bliſs,
To whom a virtuous friend is given,
So ſweet harmonious friendſhip is,
Add but Eternity, you'll make it Heaven.

VI.

The minutes in your converſation ſpent,
Were feſtivals of true content.
Here, here, an ark of pleaſing reſt,
My ſoul had found that reſtleſs dove,
My preſent ſtate methought was beſt,
I envy'd none below, ſcarce thoſe above.

VII.

But now the better part of me is gone,
My Sun is ſet, my turtle flown.
Tho' here and there of leſſer bliſs,
Some twinkling Stars give feeble light,
Still there a mournful darkneſs is,
They ſhine but juſt enough to ſhew 'tis night.

VIII.

Fatal divorce! What have I done amiſs,
To bear ſuch miſery as this?
The world yields now no real good,
All happineſs is now become
But painted and deluding food:
As mere a fiction as *Elyſium*.

IX.

Well then, ſince nothing elſe can pleaſe my taſte,
I'll ruminate on pleaſures paſt.
So then with glorious viſions bleſt,
The waking Hermit finds no theme
That's grateful to his thoughtful breaſt,
He ſweetly recollects his pleaſing dream.

To a Lady, ſuppoſed to ask, What Life was?

'TIS not becauſe I breathe and eat,
'Tis not becauſe a vigorous heat
Drives round my blood, and does impart
Motion to my pulſe and heart:
'Tis not ſuch proofs as theſe can give
Any aſſurance that I live:
No, no, to live is to enjoy;
What marrs our bliſs does life deſtroy;
The days which paſs without content,
Are not liv'd properly, but ſpent.
Who ſays the damn'd in Hell do live?
That word we to the bleſſed give:
The ſumm of all whoſe happineſs
We by the name of Life expreſs.
Well then if this account be true,
To live is ſtill to live with you.

The third Chapter of JOB *paraphraſed.*

I.

CURS'D, ever curs'd be that unhappy day,
When firſt the Sun's unwelcome ray
I ſaw with trembling eyes, being newly come
From the dark priſon of the womb.
When firſt to me my vital breath was lent,
That breath which now muſt all in ſighs be ſpent.

II.

Let not the Sun his chearing beams diſplay
Upon that wretched, wretched day;
But mourn in ſables, and all over ſhroud
His glories in a ſullen Cloud.
Let light to upper regions be cõfin'd,
And all below as black as is my mind.

III.

Curs'd be the night which firſt began to lay
The ground-work of this Houſe of clay:
Let it not have the honour to appear
In the retinue of the year.
Let all the days ſhun its ſociety,
Hate, curſe, abandon it as much as I.

IV.

Let melancholy call that night her own,
Then let her ſigh, then let her groan:
A general grief throughout all nature ſpread,
With folded arms, and drooping head.
All harps be ſtill, or tun'd to ſuch a ſtrain
As fiends might hear, and yet not eaſe their pain.

V.

Let neither Moon nor Stars, with borrow'd light,
Chequer the blackneſs of that night:
But let a pure unqueſtion'd darkneſs rear
Her ſooty wings all o're the air;

Such

Such as once on th' abyſs of Chaos lay,
Not to be pierc'd by Stars, ſcarce by the edge of day.

VI.

Why was there then, ah, why a paſſage free
At once for life and miſery?
Why did I not uncloyſter'd from the womb
Take my next lodging in a tomb?
Why with ſuch cruel tenderneſs and care,
Was I nurs'd up to ſorrow and deſpair?

VII.

For now in ſweet repoſe might I have lain,
Secure from any grief or pain:
Untouch'd with care, my bed I ſhould have made
In death's cool and refreſhing ſhade.
I ſhould have ſlept now in a happy place,
All calm and ſilent as the empty ſpace.

VIII.

There, where great Emperors their heads lay down,
Tir'd with the burthen of a crown.
There, where the mighty, popular and great,
Are happy in a dear retreat;
Enjoy that ſolid peace which here in vain,
In grotts and ſhady walks they ſought t' obtain,

IX.

None of Hell's agents can or dare moleſt
This aweful ſanctuary of reſt.
No priſoners ſighs, no groanings of the ſlave,
Diſturb the quiet of the grave.
From toil and labour here they ever ceaſe,
And keep a Sabbath of ſweet reſt and peace.

X.

Why then does Heaven on mortals life beſtow,
When 'tis thus overtax'd with woe?
Why am I forc'd to live againſt my will,
When all the good is loſt in ill?
My ſighs flow thick, my groans ſound from afar,
Like falling waters to the traveller.

Seraphick Love.

I.

'TIS true, frail Beauty, I did once reſign
To thy imperious charms this heart of mine:
There didſt thou undiſturb'd thy ſcepter ſway,
And I methoght was pleas'd t' obey.
Thou ſeem'ſt ſo lovely, ſo divine,
With ſuch ſweet graces didſt thou ſhine,
Thou entertain'ſt my amorous ſenſe
With ſuch harmonious excellence,
That credulous and ſilly I,
With vain, with impious idolatry,
Ador'd that Star which was to lead me to the Deity.

II.

But now, thou ſoft enchantreſs of the mind,
Farewel, a change, a mighty change I find;
The empire of my heart thou muſt reſign,
For I can be no longer thine.
A nobler, a diviner gueſt,
Has took poſſeſſion of my breaſt.
He has, and muſt engroſs it all,
And yet the room is ſtill too ſmall.
In vain you tempt my heart to rove,
A fairer object now my ſoul does move,
It muſt be all devotion, what before was love.

III.

Through contemplation's Opticks I have ſeen
Him who is fairer than the ſons of men:
The ſource of good, the light *Archetypall*,
Beauty in the original.
The faireſt of ten thouſand, He,
Proportion all and harmony.
All mortal beauty's but a ray
Of his bright ever-ſhining day;

A little feeble twinkling Star,
Which now the Sun's in place muſt diſappear;
There is but one that's good, there is but one that's
IV. [fair.
To thee, thou only fair, my ſoul aſpires,
With holy breathings, languiſhing deſires.
To thee m'inamour'd, panting heart does move,
By efforts of *Ecſtatick* love.
How do thy glorious ſtreams of light
Refreſh my intellectual ſight!
Tho' broken, and ſtrain'd through a skreen
Of envious fleſh, that ſtands between!
When ſhall m' impriſon'd ſoul be free,
That ſhe thy native uncorrected light may ſee,
And gaze upon thy beatifick face to all eternity?

The RETIREMENT.

I.

WELL, I have thought on't, and I find,
This buſy world is nonſenſe all;
I here deſpair to pleaſe my mind,
Her ſweeteſt honey is ſo mixt with gall.
Come then, I'll try how 'tis to be alone,
Live to my ſelf a while, and be my own.

II.

I've try'd, and bleſs the happy change;
So happy, I could almoſt vow,
Never from this retreat to range,
For ſure I ne'er can be ſo bleſt as now.
From all th' allays of bliſs I here am free,
I pity others, and none envy me.

III.

III.

Here in this ſhady lonely grove,
I ſweetly think my hours away,
Neither with buſineſs vex'd, nor love,
Which in the world bear ſuch tyrannick ſway:
No tumults can my cloſe apartment find,
Calm as thoſe ſeats above, which know no ſtorm nor [wind.

IV.

Let plots and news embroil the ſtate,
Pray what's that to my books and me?
Whatever be the Kingdom's fate,
Here I am ſure t' enjoy a Monarchy.
Lord of my ſelf, accountable to none,
Like the firſt man in Paradiſe, alone.

V.

While the ambitious vainly ſue,
And of the partial Stars complain,
I ſtand upon the ſhore and view
The mighty labours of the diſtant main,
I'm fluſh'd with ſilent joy, and ſmile to ſee
The ſhafts of fortune ſtill drop ſhort of me.

VI.

Th' uneaſy pageantry of ſtate,
And all the plagues to thought and ſenſe
Are far remov'd; I'm plac'd by fate
Out of the road of all impertinence.
Thus, rho' my fleeting life runs ſwiftly on,
'Twill not be ſhort, becauſe 'tis all my own.

The INFIDEL.

I.

FArewel fruition, thou grand cruel cheat,
Which firſt our hopes does raiſe and then defeat.
Farewel thou midwife to abortive bliſs,
Thou myſtery of fallacies.
Diſtance preſents the object fair,
With charming features, and a graceful air,
But when we come to ſeize th' inviting prey,
Like a ſhy ghoſt, it vaniſhes away.

II.

So to th' unthinking boy the diſtant Sky
Seems on ſome mountain's ſurface to rely;
He with ambitious haſte climbs the aſcent,
Curious to touch the Firmament:
But when with an unweary'd pace
Arriv'd he is at the long-wiſh'd-for place,
With ſighs the ſad defeat he does deplore,
His Heaven is ſtill as diſtant as before.

III.

And yet 'twas long e'er I could throughly ſee
This grand impoſtor's frequent treachery.
Tho' often fool'd, yet I ſhould ſtill dream on
Of pleaſure in reverſion.
Tho' ſtill he did my hopes deceive,
His fair pretenſions I would ſtill believe.
Such was my charity, that tho' I knew
And found him falſe, yet I would think him true.

IV.

But now he ſhall no more with ſhews deceive,
I will no more enjoy, no more believe.
Th' unwary juggler has ſo often ſhewn
His fallacies, that now they're known.

Shall

Shall I truſt on? the cheat is plain,
I will not be impos'd upon again.
I'll view the bright appearance from afar,
But never try to catch the falling Star.

On a MUSICIAN *ſuppoſed to be mad with Muſick.*

I.

POor dull miſtake of low mortality,
To call that madneſs which is ecſtacy.
'Tis no diſorder of the brain,
His ſoul is only ſet t' an higher ſtrain.
Out-ſoar he does the ſphere of common ſenſe,
Rais'd to diviner excellence;
But when at higheſt pitch, his ſoul out-flies,
Not reaſon's bounds, but thoſe of vulgar eyes.

II.

So when the myſtick Sibyl's ſacred breaſt
Was with divine infuſions poſſeſt,
'Twas rage and madneſs thought to be,
Which was all oracle and myſtery.
And ſo the ſoul that's ſhortly to commence
A ſpirit free from dregs of ſenſe,
Is thought to rave, when ſhe diſcourſes high,
And breathes the lofty ſtrains of immortality.

III.

Muſick, thou generous ferment of the ſoul,
Thou univerſal cement of the whole;
Thou ſpring of paſſion, that doſt inſpire
Religious ardours, and poetick fire,
Who'd think that madneſs ſhould b' aſcrib'd to thee,
That mighty diſcord to thy harmony?
But 'twas ſuch ignorance that call'd the gift divine
Of various tongues, rage, and th' effects of wine.

IV.

But thou, ſeraphick ſoul, do thou advance
In thy ſweet ecſtacy, thy pleaſing trance:
Let thy brisk paſſions mount ſtill higher,
Till they join to the element of fire.
Soar higher yet, till thou ſhalt calmly hear
The muſick of a well-tun'd ſphere:
Then on the lumpiſh maſs look down, and thou ſhalt know
The madneſs of the world, for groveling ſtill below.

The CONSOLATION.

I.

I Grant 'tis bad, but there is ſome relief
In the ſociety of grief.
'Tis ſweet to him that mourns to ſee
A whole houſe clad in ſorrow's livery.
Grief in communion does remiſs appear,
Like harſher ſounds in conſort, which leſs grate the ear.

II.

Men would not curſe the Stars, did they diſpenſe
In common their ill influence.
Let none be rich, and poverty
Would not be thought ſo great a miſery.
Our diſcontent is from compariſon; own.
Were better ſtates unſeen, each man would like his

III.

Should partial ſeas wreck my poor ſhip alone,
I might with cauſe my fate bemoan.
But ſince before I ſink, I ſee
A numerous fleet of ſhips deſcend with me,
Why don't I with content my breath reſign?
I will, and in the greater ruin bury mine.

The

The CHOICE.

Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico, &c.

I.

NO, I ſhan't envy him, whoe'er he be,
That ſtands upon the battlements of ſtate;
Stand there who will for me,
I'd rather be ſecure than great.
Of being ſo high the pleaſure is but ſmall,
But long the ruin, if I chance to fall.

II.

Let me in ſome ſweet ſhade ſerenely lye,
Happy in leiſure and obſcurity!
Whilſt others place their joys
In popularity and noiſe.
Let my ſoft minutes glide obſcurely on,
Like ſubterraneous ſtreams, unheard, unknown.

III.

Thus when my days are all in ſilence paſt,
A good plain country-man I'll dye at laſt.
Death cannot chuſe but be
To him a mighty miſery,
Who to the world was popularly known,
And dies a ſtranger to himſelf alone.

The MEDITATION.

I.

IT muſt be done (my ſoul) but 'tis a ſtrange,
A diſmal and myſterious change,
When thou ſhalt leave this tenement of clay,
And to an unkown ſomewhere wing away;
When time ſhall be eternity, and thou
Shalt be thou know'ſt not what, and live thou
know'ſt not how.

II.

Amazing ſtate! No wonder that we dread
To think of death, or view the dead.
Thou'rt all wrapt up in clouds, as if to thee
Our very knowledge had antipathy.
Death could not a more ſad retinue find,
Sickneſs and pain before, and darkneſs all behind.

III.

Some courteous ghoſt, tell this great ſecrecy,
What 'tis you are, and we muſt be.
You warn us of approaching death, and why
May we not know from you what 'tis to dye?
But you, having ſhot the gulph, delight to ſee
Succeeding ſouls plunge in with like uncertainty.

IV.

When life's cloſe knot by writ from deſtiny,
Diſeaſe ſhall cut, or age untye;
When after ſome delays, ſome dying ſtrife,
The ſoul ſtands ſhivering on the ridge of life;
With what a dreadful curioſity
Does ſhe launch out into the ſea of vaſt Eternity!

V.

So when the ſpacious globe was delug'd o'er,
And lower holds could ſave no more,

On th' utmoſt bough th' aſtoniſh'd ſinners ſtood,
And view'd th' advances of th' encroaching flood.
O'ertopp'd at length by th' element's increaſe,
With horror they reſign'd to the untry'd abyſs.

The IRRECONCILABLE.

I.

I Little thought (my *Damon*) once, that you
Could prove, and what is more, to me, untrue.
Can I forget ſuch treachery, and live?
Mercy it ſelf would not this crime forgive.
Heaven's gates refuſe to let apoſtates in,
No, that's the great unpardonable ſin.

II.

Did you not vow by all the powers above,
That you could none but dear *Orinda* love?
Did you not ſwear by all that is divine,
That you would only be and every mine?
You did, and yet you live ſecurely too,
And think that Heaven's falſe as well as you.

III.

Believe me, love's a thing much too divine
Thus to be ap'd, and made a mere deſign.
'Tis no leſs crime than Treaſon here to feign,
'Tis counterfeiting of a royal coin.
But ah! hypocriſy's no where ſo common grown
As in moſt ſacred things, love and religion.

IV.

Go ſeek new conqueſts, go, you have my leave,
You ſhall not grieve her whom you could deceive.
I don't lament, but pity what you do,
Nor take that love as loſt, which ne'er was true.
The way that's left you to befriend my fate,
Is now to prove more conſtant in your hate.

The ADVICE.

Prudens futuri temporis excitum
Caliginoſa nocte premit Deus. Hor.

I.

WHAT's forming in the womb of Fate
Why art thou ſo concern'd to know?
Doſt think 'twou'd be advantage to thy ſtate!
But wiſer Heaven does not think it ſo.
With thy content thou would'ſt this knowledge buy,
No part of life thoud'ſt pleaſant find
For dread of what thou ſeeſt behind, [dye.
Thou would'ſt but taſte of the inlightning fruit and

II.

Well then, has Heaven events to come,
Hid with the blackeſt veil of night;
But ſtill in vain if we foreſtal our doom,
And with prophetick fears our ſelves affright:
Grand folly! whether thus 'twill be or no
We know not, and yet ſilly Man
Secures his evils what he can, [blow.
And ſtabs himſelf with grief, leſt Fate ſhould miſs the

III.

Be wiſe, and let it be thy care
To manage well the preſent hour;
Call home thy ranging thoughts and fix them here,
This only mind, this only's in thy power:
The reſt no ſettled, ſteady courſe maintain,
Like rivers, which now gently ſlide
Within their bounds, now with full tide
O'erflow, whom houſes, cattel, trees, reſiſt in vain.

IV.

IV.

'Tis he that's happy, he alone
Lives free and pleaſant, that can ſay
With every period of the ſetting Sun,
I've lived, and run my race like him to day.
To morrow let the angry Heavens frown,
Or ſmile with influence more kind,
On chance depends what's yet behind,
But ſure what I have ſeiz'd already's all my own.

V.

Fortune, who no diverſion knows
Like diſappointment, laughs to ſee
How variouſly ſhe can her gifts tranſpoſe;
Sometimes to one, ſometimes t'another free.
Be ſure to enjoy her while ſhe's pleas'd to ſtay:
But if for flight ſhe does prepare,
Don't you at parting drop a tear,
But hold your virtue faſt, for that alone you may.

To HIMSELF.

I.

NOT yet convinc'd? Why wilt thou ſtill purſue
Through Nature's field deluſive bliſs?
'Tis falſe, or elſe too fugitive if true;
Thou may'ſt as ſoon thy ſhadow overtake as this.
The gaudy light ſtill dances in thy eye,
Thou hot and eager in the chaſe
Art drawn through many a thorny rugged place,
Still labouring and ſighing, but canſt ne'er come nigh.

II.

Give o'er, my ſoul, give o'er, nor ſtrive again
This treacherous chymick gold to find.
Tell me, why ſhould'ſt thou fancy, there remain

Days

Days yet to come more ſweet, than thoſe thou'ſt left
A wiſer Chymiſt far than thou, t'obtain [behind?
This jewel all his treaſures ſpent;
But yet he fail'd in's grand experiment,
And all he gain'd was this, to know that all was vain.

III.

Forbear, and at another's coſt be wiſe,
Nor longer this coy miſtreſs woo.
He's mad that runs where none can win the prize,
Why ſhould'ſt thou loſe thy miſtreſs, and thy labour
Heaven does but ſport with our ſimplicity [too?
By laying jewels in our way,
For when we ſtoop to ſeize the glittering prey, [eye.
They're ſnatcht away again, and baulk our greedy

IV.

'Tis ſo, the choiceſt good this World can give,
Will never ſtand fruition's teſt.
This all by experience find, yet few believe,
And in the midſt of cheats, hope they ſhall once be
Strange Magick this. So witches tho' they find [bleſt.
No comfort from their airy meat,
Forget at next cabal their ſlender treat,
And greedily again fall to their feaſt of wind.

V.

But thou, my ſoul, thy ſtrong conviction ſhew,
And never reach at bliſs again.
Our beſt good here is Nature's bounds to know,
And thoſe attempts to ſpare, which elſe would be in
Here then contain thy ſelf, nor higher good [vain.
In this inchanted place purſue.
And pity thoſe ſhort-ſighted ſouls that do;
This World is beſt enjoy'd, when 'tis beſt underſtood.

The REFUSAL.

I.

THink not to court me from my dear retreat;
No, I proteſt 'tis all in vain.
My ſtars did never mean I ſhould be great,
And I the very thought diſdain.
Or if they did, their will I'll diſobey,
And in my little orb remain as fix'd as they.

II.

Honour, that idol, which the moſt adore,
Receives no homage from my knee.
Content in privacy, I value more
Than all uneaſy dignity.
How ſhould that empty thing deſerve my care,
Which virtue does not need, and vice can never bear?

III.

Shall I change ſolid and unenvy'd joys
Of a ſerene, tho' humble ſtate,
For ſplendid trouble, pomp, and ſenſeleſs noiſe?
This I deſpiſe, as well as hate.
Poor gain of that condition, which will be
Envy'd by others, and as much diſlik'd by me.

HYMN *to* DARKNESS.

I.

HAIL thou moſt ſacred venerable thing!
What muſe is worthy thee to ſing?
Thee, from whoſe pregnant univerſal womb
All things, even light, thy rival, firſt did come.
What dares he not attempt that ſings of thee,
Thou firſt and greateſt myſtery?

Who

Who can the ſecrets of thy eſſence tell ?
Thou, like the light of God, art inacceſſible.

II.

Before great love this monument did raiſe,
This ample theatre of praiſe.
Before the folding circles of the Sky
Were tun'd by him, who is all harmony.
Before the morning Stars their hymn began,
Before the council held for man.
Before the birth of either time or place,
Thou reign'ſt unqueſtion'd monarch in the empty [ſpace.

III.

Thy native lot thou didſt to light reſign,
But ſtill half of the globe is thine.
Here with a quiet, but yet awful hand,
Like the beſt Emperors thou doſt command.
To thee the Stars above their brightneſs owe,
And mortals their repoſe below.
To thy protection fear and ſorrow flee,
And thoſe that weary are of light, find reſt in thee.

IV.

Tho' Light and Glory be th' Almighty's throne,
Darkneſs is his pavilion.
From that his radiant Beauty, but from thee
He has his Terror and his Majeſty.
Thus when he firſt proclaim'd his ſacred law,
And would his rebel ſubjects awe,
Like Princes on ſome great ſolemnity,
H' appear'd in's robes of ſtate, and clad himſelf with [thee.

V.

The bleſt above do thy ſweet umbrage prize,
When cloy'd with Light, they veil their eyes.
The viſion of the Deity is made
More ſweet and beatifick by thy ſhade.
But we poor tenants of this orb below
Don't here thy excellencies know;

Till death our underſtandings does improve,
And then our wiſer ghoſts thy ſilent night-walks love.

VI.

But thee I now admire, thee would I chuſe
For my religion, or my muſe.
'Tis hard to tell whether thy reverend ſhade
Has more good Votaries or Poets made;
From thy dark caves were inſpirations given,
And from thick groves went vows to Heaven.
Hail then thou muſe's and devotion's ſpring,
'Tis juſt we ſhould adore, 'tis juſt we ſhould thee ſing.

The INVITATION.

Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field, let us lodge in the villages, Cantic. vii. 11.

I.

COME, thou divineſt object of my love,
This noiſy region don't with us agree;
Come, let us hence remove,
I cannot here enjoy my ſelf, or thee.
Here vice and folly keep their court,
Hither their chiefeſt favourites reſort,
Debauchery has here her royal chair,
This is her great metropolis,
What e'er we ſee or hear contagion is;
Their manners are polluted like the air.
From both unwholſom vapours riſe
And blacken with ungrateful ſteams the neighbouring skies.

II.

Come, we'll e'en to our country ſeat repair,
The native home of innocence and love.
There we'll draw purer air,
And pity monarchs ſitting in our grove.

Here

Here virtue has her ſafe retreat,
Abandon'd by the many and the great.
Content does here her peaceful ſcepter ſway;
Here faithfulneſs and friendſhip dwell,
And modeſty has here her humble cell:
Come, my beloved, come, and let's away,
Be thou my Angel, good and kind,
And I'll ne'er look at *Sodom* which we leave behind.

III.

In fields and flow'ry meadows, woods and groves,
The firſt and beſt delights of human kind,
There we'll enjoy our loves,
All free, and only to our ſelves confin'd.
Here ſhall my eyes be fixt on thee,
Till every paſſion be an ecſtaſy.
Each hour to thee ſhall be canonical;
The ſweets of nature ſhall not ſtay,
My ſoul, but only ſhew to thee the way;
To thee, thou beauty's great original.
Come, my beloved, let's go prove
Theſe ſweet advantages of peace, content, and love.

Sitting in an ARBOUR.

I.

THUS ye good powers, thus let me ever be
Serene, retir'd, from love and buſineſs free;
The reſt of your great world I here reſign
To the contentions of the great;
I only ask that this retreat,
This little tenement be mine.
All my ambition's to this point confin'd;
Others inlarge their fortunes, I my mind.

II.

II.

How calm, how happy, how ſerene am I!
How ſatisfy'd with my own company!
To few things foreign my content I owe;
But in my ſelf have almoſt all
Which I dare good or pleaſing call,
Or (what's as well) I fancy ſo.
Thus I affect an independent ſtate,
And (as a creature can) in ſelf I terminate.

III.

Pleas'd with a various ſcene of thought I lie,
Whilſt an obliging ſtream ſlides gently by,
Silent and deep as is the bliſs I chuſe,
All round the little winged quire,
Pathetick, tender thoughts inſpire,
And with their ſtrains provoke my muſe.
With eaſe the inſpiration I obey,
And ſing as unconcern'd, and as well pleas'd as they.

IV.

If ought below deſerve the name of bliſs,
It muſt (whate'er the great ones think) be this.
So once the travelling patriarch doubly bleſt
With dreams divine from Heaven ſent,
And his own Heaven of content,
On's rocky pillow took his reſt.
Angels ſtood ſmiling by, and ſaid, Were we our bliſs
To change, it ſhould be for a ſtate like his.

V.

'Tis ſtrange, ſo cheap, and yet ſo great a good
Should by ſo very few be underſtood.
That bliſs which others ſeek with toil and ſweat
For which they prodigally waſte
Their treaſures, and yet miſs at laſt,
Here I have at an eaſie rate.
So thoſe that coſtly phyſick uſe in vain,
Sometimes by cheap receipts their health obtain.

The COMPLAINT.

I.

WEll 'tis a dull perpetual round
Which here we ſilly mortals tread;
Here's nought, I'll ſwear, worth living to be found,
I wonder how 'tis with the dead.
Better I hope, or elſe ye powers divine
Unmake me, I my immortality reſign.

II.

Still to be vex'd by joys delay'd,
Or by fruition to be cloy'd?
Still to be wearied in a fruitleſs chaſe,
Yet ſtill to run, and loſe the race?
Still our departed pleaſures to lament
Which yet when preſent, gave us no content?

III.

Is this the thing we ſo extol,
For which we would prolong our breath?
Do we for this long life a bleſſing call
And tremble at the name of death?
Sots that we are to think by that we gain
Which is as well retain'd as loſt with pain.

IV.

Is it for this that we adore
Phyſicians, and their art implore?
Do we bleſs nature's liberal ſupply
Of helps againſt mortality?
Sure 'tis but vain the Tree of Life to boaſt,
When Paradiſe, wherein it grew, is loſt.

V.

Ye powers, why did you man create
With ſuch inſatiable deſire?
If you'd endow him with no more eſtate
You ſhould have made him leſs aſpire.
But now our appetites you vex and cheat
With real hunger, and phantaſtick meat.

A PASTORAL *upon the Bleſſed Virgin, gone from* Nazareth *to viſit* Elizabeth. *Wherein the ſadneſs of the country* Nazareth *is deſcribed during the abſence of the Virgin.*

Tranſlated out of *Rapin.*

The Speakers are Aſor, Alphæus *and* Zebede.

Aſor. AND why, *Alphæus*, in this ſweet ſhade doſt thou
Make ſongs, which are not ſeaſonable now,
Since we of fair *Parthenia* are bereft!
Parthenia has our fields and mountains left.
Alph. Ay ſomething 'twas my pipe was t'other day
So ſtrangely out of tune, and in ſo hoarſe a key.
Zeb. And I too this misfortune might have known
By ſome late ſigns, had my thoughts been my own.
My little goats as I to paſture led
When the graſs riſes from its dewy bed,
I wonder'd why the new born flowers hung down
Their languid heads, as if ſcorch'd by the Sun.
The lilly and the roſe to droop were ſeen,
And ſo did the immortal Evergreen,
Parthenia (alas) was gone——
For thee, ſweet Maid, lilly and roſe did grieve,
The Evergreen thy abſence did perceive.
Aſor. There grows a ſhady elm in our yon grove
Where Philomel wou'd conſtantly repair,
Sweet Philomel of all the joy and love,
And with melodious accents fill the air
When *Parthenis* was here, this ſhady tree
Was never, never from her muſick free.

But now divine *Parthenia* is gone,
Silent and ſad ſhe wanders up and down,
And among thorns and lonely hedges makes her moan.

Alph. Whilſt thou, fair Nymph, didſt bleſs us with thy ſtay,
Each grove was ſprightly, every wood was gay.
The boughs with birds, the caves with ſwains did ring,
And the ſhrill graſhopper about the field did ſing.
But now each wood is ſilent as the grave,
Nor does the ſhepherd whiſtle in his cave,
Nor does the bird ſit chirping on the bough,
Nor is the graſhopper to be heard now.

Zeb. The fields with living ſprings were fruitful made,
And every ſpring had his refreſhing ſhade.
Sweet flowers to the bees were ne'er deny'd,
The fold with graſs was conſtantly ſupply'd.
Now *Parthenis* is gone, the induſtrious bee
Can't flowers procure with all his induſtry:
The folds want graſs, the fields their living ſprings,
Nor have the fountains now their ſhady coverings.
Divine *Parthenia!* with thee we've loſt
All the delights our rural life could boaſt.

Aſor. My little goats were boldly wont to go
And climb the deſert hills, my ſheep would do ſo too.
Then happy ſheep, the wolf the fold did ſpare,
The heat the infant trees, the rain the ripen'd ear.

Alph. Thou now perhaps, ſweet Nymph, art travelling o'er
Some craggy hills, unknown to thee before,
Whilſt we ſit here among the ſhady trees,
And ſwallow down each cool refreſhing breeſe.

Zeb. Say, you ſweet weſtern blaſts that gently blow,
And you fair rivers that as ſwiftly flow,
You who ſo often have been vocal made
By ſwains that pipe and ſing under the ſhade;

Say,

Say, now while *Phœbus* holds the middle Sky
Under what rock does ſweet *Parthenia* lye?
Or through what coaſts may I her wandrings trace?
Or in what fountain ſees ſhe now her lovely face?
Ah! Tho' our way of life be plain and courſe,
Yet don't thou like thy country e'er the worſe,
Since 'thas thy happy parent been and nurſe.
Aſor. Ah! where's that ſweet retreat can thee detain,
If thou thy native country doſt diſdain?
Here are pure ſprings, and o'er the ſprings are bowers,
Fine woods and fruit-trees, and a world of flowers.
Alph. But why, fair Nymph, wouldſt thou be abſent now,
When the ſweet ſtrawberry raiſes up his head,
Like morning ſun all delicately red,
And odorous bloſſoms ſpring from every bough?
Zeb. Don't you, my ſheep, that yonder bank come near,
'Tis to *Parthenia* ſacred all that's there,
Nor wou'd the graſs be touch'd by any but by her.
Aſor. Before fierce *Boreas* blow with's boiſterous mouth,
Or rainy weather come on from the ſouth,
Be ſure, *Parthenia*, to return again,
Leſt by the cold thou ſuffer or the rain.
Alph. In a choice garden is reſerv'd for thee,
Sweet marjoram, and a lagre myrtle tree;
Myrtles thou always lov'ſt, come then if now
Thou ſtill lov'ſt flowers, as thou wert wont to do.
Zeb. Ripe apples now hang dangling on the tree
Ready to drop, and only ſtay for thee.
The fig of thy delay too does complain,
The tender fig, but let them both remain
Till thou to thy dear *Nazareth* return again.

Aſor. Return, ſweet Nymph, and with thee thou ſhalt bring
All the delights and beauties of the ſpring.
Freſh graſs again ſhall on the mountains grow,
The rivers ſhall with milk and Nectar flow.
The woods ſhall put on their green livery,
And nature in her pomp ſhall wait on thee.
The country ſwains ſhall flowers and preſents bring,
And I a violet garland for my offering.
With me ſhall *Azarias* come along,
Who with a ſmooth wrought pipe ſhall play the ſong,
The ſong that *Iſrael*'s Shepherd as he ſtood
By *Jordan*'s bank, play'd to the liſt'ning flood.
Alph. But if thou longer ſhouldſt our hopes deceive,
With ruſhes I'll a basket for thee weave;
Here thy own *Nazareth* I'll repreſent,
How all things here thy abſence do lament;
The little goats thou wandring here ſhalt ſee
Mournful and ſad, and all for want of thee.
The rivers which before flow'd ſwift and clear,
As glad the image of thy face to bear,
Shall move benum'd and ſlow, whilſt on each hand
Appears the thirſty and forſaken ſand.
The corn ſhall droop and languiſh in the field,
The meadows no freſh graſs or herb ſhall yield,
The fir-tree which with ſtately pride before,
Her curious ſhady locks towards Heaven ſpread,
Shall now with down-caſt boughs, and penſive head,
Thy abſence mourn, and thy return implore.
Thou round about ſhalt all things weeping ſee,
If tears in ruſh-work may decipher'd be.
Zeb. Preſerve, ye powers, if you don't us diſdain,
The Nymph, whilſt ſhe runs panting o'er the plain.
And while ſhe's abſent ſince ſhe once had love
For theſe our fields, take care, ye powers above,
That

That neither rivers do their banks o'erflow,
Nor ſtorms the paſtures ſpoil, or ripen'd corn o'er-
throw.
Aſor. From night-fires let our ſtalls (ſweet
Nymph) be free,
Defend from heat the roſe, from cold the myr-
tle-tree,
While roſe and myrtle are belov'd by thee.
That if you chance to caſt a longing eye
Back on theſe fields, now naked and forlorn,
We may have ſtill ſome flowers left to ſupply
Garlands t'expreſs our joy, and dreſſes you t'adorn.
Alph. Haſte not, if through rough ways thy jour-
ney lye,
Haſte not, the heat will prove an injury.
Let not the ſun thy brighter beauties ſpoil:
Ah! why wilt thou undo thy ſelf with too much toil?
Take pleaſing ſhelter in ſome gentle ſhade
'Till the day ſlacken, and the heat b'allay'd.
Zeb. Parthenia, why doſt thou our hopes prolong?
Perhaps too, ſome ill pipe, and worſer ſong
Now grate thy ears, whilſt thy poor country ſwain
On the deaf winds beſtows ſweet lays in vain.
Hang there, my pipe, 'till ſhe return, and be
A ſilent monument of my miſery.
For what are ſongs or mirth without her company?
Aſor. Our hills ſhall mourn while diſtant coaſts
you bleſs,
Anamis ſhall not dance nor *Sabaris*.
The fields, the naked fields no ſong ſhall know,
And brooks their diſcontent by murmuring ſtreams
ſhall ſhew.
Thus did the ſwains the abſent Nymph lament,
The neighbouring woods to Heaven their doleful
accents ſent.

The Tenth Ode of the Second Book of HORACE, *tranſlated.*

I.

'TIS much the better way, believe me 'tis,
Not far to venture on the great abyſs,
Nor yet from ſtorms thy veſſel to ſecure,
To touch too nigh upon the dangerous ſhore.

II.

The golden mean, as ſhe's too nice to dwell
Among the ruins of a filthy cell,
So is her modeſty withal as great
To baulk the envy of a princely ſeat.

III.

Th' ambitious winds with greater ſpite combine
To ſhock the grandeur of the ſtately pine.
The height of ſtructures makes the ruin large,
And clouds againſt high hills their hotteſt bolts
diſcharge.

IV.

An even well-pois'd mind, an evil ſtate
With hope, a good with fear does moderate.
The ſummer's pride, by winter is brought down,
And flowers again the conquering ſeaſon crown.

V.

Take heart, nor of the laws of fate complain,
Tho' now 'tis cloudy, 'twill clear up again.
The bow *Apollo* does not always uſe
But with his milder lyre ſometimes awakes the muſe.

VI.

Be life and ſpirit, when fortune proves unkind,
And ſummon up the vigour of thy mind.
But when thou'rt driven by too officious gales,
Be wiſe, and gather in the ſwelling ſails.

The

The DISCOURAGEMENT.

I.

WHat wou'd the wiſe men's cenſure be,
I wonder, ſhould they hear me ſay
I was reſolv'd to throw my books away ?
How wou'd ſome ſcorn, and others pity me !
Sure he's in love, 'tis for ſome charming *Eve*
That he like *Adam* Paradiſe does leave.
This only difference would be
Between my great grandſire and me,
That I my paradiſe forego
For want of appetite to know.

II.

'Tis not that knowledge I deſpiſe ;
No, you miſconſtrue my deſign ;
Or that t' enthuſiaſm I incline,
And hope by inſpiration to be wiſe.
'Tis not for this I bid my books adieu,
No, I love learning full as well as you,
And have the arts great circle run
With as much vigour as the ſun
His *Zodiac* treads, till t'other day
A thought ſurpris'd me in my way.

III.

Thought I, for any thing I know,
What we have ſtamp'd for ſcience here,
Does only the appearance of it wear,
And will not paſs above, tho' current here below ;
Perhaps they've other rules to reaſon by,
And what's truth here, with them's abſurdity.
We truth by a refracted ray
View, like the ſun at ebb of day :
Whom the groſs, treacherous Atmoſphere
Makes where it is not, to appear.

IV.

Why then ſhall I with ſweat and pain
Dig mines of diſputable oar?
My labour's certain, ſo is not my ſtore,
I may hereafter unlearn all again.
Why then for truth do I my ſpirits waſte,
When after all I may be gull'd at laſt?
So when the honeſt Patriarch thought
With ſeven years labour he had bought
His *Rachel*'s love, by morning light,
He found the error of the night.

V:

Or grant ſome knowledge dwells below,
'Tis but for ſome few years to ſtay,
Till I'm ſet looſe from this dark houſe of clay,
And in an inſtant I ſhall all things know.
Then ſhall I learn t'accumulate degrees,
And be at once made maſter of all ſciences.
What need I then great ſums lay out,
And that eſtate with care foreſtall,
Which when few years are come about,
Into my hands of courſe will fall?

The 63d *Chapter of* ISAIAH *paraphraſed to the* 6th *Verſe.*

A PINDARIQUE ODE.

I.

STrange ſcene of glory! am I well awake?
Or is't my fancy's wild miſtake?
It cannot be a dream, bright beams of light
Flow from the viſions face, and pierce my tender ſight.
No common viſion this, I ſee
Some marks of more than human Majeſty.

Who

Who is this mighty Hero, who?
With glories round his head, and terror in his brow?
From *Bozrah* lo he comes, a ſcarlet die
O'erſpreads his cloaths, and does outvie
The bluſhes of the morning sky.
Triumphant and victorious he appears,
And honour in his looks and habit wears:
How ſtrong he treads, how ſtately does he go!
Pompous and ſolemn is his pace,
And full of Majeſty, as is his face.
Who is this mighty Hero, who?
'Tis I who to my promiſe faithful ſtand,
I who the powers of death, hell, and the grave,
Have foil'd with this all-conquering hand,
I who moſt ready am, and mighty too to ſave.

II.

Why wear'ſt thou then this ſcarlet die?
Say, mighty Hero, why?
Why do thy garments look all red
Like them that in the wine-fat tread?
The wine-preſs I alone have trod,
That vaſt unweildy frame, which long did ſtand
Unmov'd, and which no mortal force could e'er com-
That ponderous maſs I ply'd alone [mand;
And with me to aſſiſt were none;
A mighty task it was, worthy the Son of God.
Angels ſtood trembling at the dreadful ſight,
Concern'd with what ſucceſs I ſhould go through
The work I undertook to do;
Inrag'd I put forth all my might
And down the engine preſs'd, the violent force
Diſturb'd the univerſe, put nature out of courſe.
The blood guſh'd out in ſtreams, and chequer'd o'er
My garments with its deepeſt gore;
With ornamental drops bedeck'd I ſtood,
And writ my victory with my enemy's blood.

III.

III.

The day, the ſignal day is come
When of my enemies I muſt vengeance take;
The day when death ſhall have its doom,
And the dark Kingdom with its powers ſhall ſhake.
Fate in her kalendar mark'd out this day with red,
She folded down the iron leaf, and thus ſhe ſaid,
This day if ought I can divine be true,
Shall for a ſignal victory
Be celebrated to poſterity:
Then ſhall the Prince of light deſcend,
And reſcue mortals from th' infernal fiend,
Break through his ſtrongeſt forts, and all his hoſt ſubdue.
This ſaid, ſhe ſhut the adamantine volume cloſe,
And wiſh'd ſhe might the crouding years tranſpoſe;
So much ſhe long'd to have the ſcene diſplay,
And ſee the vaſt event of this important day.

IV.

And now in midſt of the revolving years,
This great, this mighty one appears:
The faithful traveller the ſun
Has number'd out the days, and the ſet period run.
I look'd, and to aſſiſt was none,
My angelick guards ſtood trembling by,
But durſt not venture nigh:
In vain too from my Father did I look
For help, my Father me forſook.
Amaz'd I was to ſee
How all deſerted me.
I took my fury for my ſole ſupport
And with my ſingle arm the conqueſt won,
Loud acclamations fill'd all Heaven's court,
The hymning guards above,
Strain'd to an higher pitch of joy and love,
The great Jehovah prais'd, and his victorious Son.

The ELEVATION.

I.

TAke wing (my ſoul) and upwards bend thy flight,
To thy originary fields of light.
Here's nothing, nothing here below
That can deſerve thy longer ſtay;
A ſecret whiſper bids thee go
To purer air, and beams of native day.
Th' ambition of the tow'ring lark out-vy,
And like him ſing as thou doſt upward fly.

II.

How all things leſſen which my ſoul before
Did with the groveling multitude adore!
Thoſe pageant glories diſappear,
Which charm and dazle mortals eyes:
How do I in this higher ſphere,
How do I mortals, with their joys deſpiſe!
Pure, uncorrupted element I breathe,
And pity their groſs atmoſphere beneath.

III.

How vile, how ſordid here thoſe trifles ſhew,
That pleaſe the tenants of that ball below!
But ha! I've loſt the little ſight,
The ſcene's remov'd, and all I ſee
Is one confus'd dark maſs of night.
What nothing was, now nothing ſeems to be:
How calm this region, how ſerene, how clear:
Sure I ſome ſtrains of heavenly muſick hear.

IV.

On, on, the task is eaſie now and light,
No ſteams of earth can here retard thy flight.
Thou needſt not now thy ſtrokes renew,
'Tis but to ſpread thy pinions wide,

And

And thou with eaſe thy ſeat wilt view,
Drawn by the bent of the ethereal tide.
'Tis ſo I find; how ſweetly on I move, [bove!
Not lett by things below, and help'd by thoſe a-

V.

But ſee, to what new region am I come?
I know it well, it is my native home.
Here led I once a life divine,
Which did all good, no evil know:
Ah! who wou'd ſuch ſweet bliſs reſign
For thoſe vain ſhews which fools admire below?
'Tis true, but don't of folly paſt complain,
But joy to ſee theſe bleſt abodes again.

VI.

A good retrieve: But lo, while thus I ſpeak,
With piercing rays th' eternal day does break.
The beauties of the face divine
Strike ſtrongly on my feeble ſight:
With what bright glories does it ſhine!
'Tis one immenſe and ever-flowing light.
Stop here, my ſoul; thou canſt not bear more bliſs,
Nor can thy now rais'd palate ever reliſh leſs.

ANNOTATIONS.

THE general deſign of the precedent poem is to repreſent the gradual aſcent of the ſoul by contemplation to the ſupreme good, together with its firm adherency to it, and its full acquieſcence in it. All which is done figuratively, under the allegory of a local elevation from the feculent regions of this lower world.

Pure

Pure uncorrupted element I breathe,
And pity their groſs atmoſphere beneath.

By pure uncorrupted element is meant the refined intellectual entertainments of the divine life, which are abſtracted from all corporeal allays. Ἡδοναὶ ταὶ ἑαυτῆ, as *Plato* is I think obſerv'd to call them, thoſe pleaſures which are proper to man as ſuch. By groſs atmoſphere is meant the more droſſy gratifications of the animal life, which comes as ſhort in purity of the divine, as the thick atmoſphere does of the pure æther.

No ſteams of earth can here retard thy flight, &c.

The thing intended in the whole ſtanza is to inſinuate the great facility and pleaſure of the divine life to one that is arrived to an habit of it. For as the magnetick influence of the earth can have no force upon him that is placed in the upper regions, beyond the ſphere of its activity, ſo (which is the counterpart of the allegory) the inclinations of the animal nature have little or no power over him, who has advanc'd to the heights of habitual contemplation. He looks down upon, and obſerves the tumults of his ſenſitive appetite, but no way ſympathizes with it; he views the troubled ſea, but with the unconcernedneſs of a ſtander by, not as one that ſails in it. His ſoul tho' in conjunction with his body, is yet above the reach of its guſts and reliſhes, and from her ſerene ſtation at once ſees and ſmiles at its little complacencies. As *Lucan* ſays of the ſoul of *Pompey*, when advanced to the ethereal regions.

—— Illic poſtquam ſe lumine vero
Implevit, ſtellaſque vagas miratur, & aſtra
Fixa polis, vidit quanta ſub nocte jaceret
Noſtra dies, riſitque ſui ludibria trunci.

And

And here I cannot chuſe but take notice of a difficulty which is very incident to the buſineſs in hand, and wherewith I my ſelf was once very much perplex'd when I firſt applied my thoughts to moral contemplations. 'Tis in ſhort this, we have a receiv'd axiom that the difficulty of the performance commends the merit of a good action. Now if ſo, it ſeems to follow that he, who by a long habitual courſe of piety and virtue his made his duty eaſy and natural to himſelf, will be leſs perfect than another who does hardly abſtain from vice, or than himſelf before the acquiſition of that habit. And then that ἐγκράτεια which *Ariſtotle* in his ethicks makes only a ſemi-virtue, becauſe of the difficulty of its performance, will for that very reaſon become *virtus heroica*; and if ſo, to make a progreſs in virtue will involve a contradiction. This I confeſs appear'd to me no inconſiderable intricacy, when it firſt occurr'd to my thoughts, and I could not preſently unwind my ſelf from it.

But in anſwer to it I conſider, *firſt*, That when the difficulty of the performance is ſaid to commend the action, 'tis not ſo to be underſtood as if difficulty did in it ſelf, as an ingredient, add any moment to the excellency of a man's virtue, but only that 'tis a ſign of it *a poſteriori*. Becauſe were not a man endow'd with ſuch a degree of virtue, he would not be able to conquer the ſuppos'd difficulty. So that if a man has a ſtock of reſolution ſufficient to conquer ſuch a difficulty, his virtue is the ſame, tho' he never be engaged in it. For all the virtue is abſolv'd in the degree of reſolution, the difficulty is only a ſign or indication of it. And upon this conſideration it is, that thoſe whom nature has befriended with ſuch an εὐφυία or happy conſtitution, as carries with it little or no temptation

tion to vice, may yet be accounted virtuous, becauſe their reſolution to virtue may be ſo firm and peremptory, that they would adhere to it notwithſtanding any oppoſition.

Secondly, I conſider that we are to diſtinguiſh of a twofold difficulty. *Firſt*, There is a difficulty which ariſes from the nature of the work it ſelf. And, *ſecondly*, there is a difficulty which ariſes from the diſpoſition of the agent. Now 'tis not this later difficulty that commends the excellency of virtue, but only the former, which is no way diminiſh'd by the habit. For after the induction of the habit, the work remains the ſame in its own nature, which it was before; the only change is in the agent, who by his habit is render'd more expedite and ready for the performance of what is good. But as for the later difficulty which proceeds from the agent himſelf, that is ſo far from commending the worth of any good action, that it derogates much from its commendation. 'Tis eaſineſs of performance that here gives the value. He that abſtains from ſenſual pleaſures with great abhorrency, and has ſet himſelf at a wide diſtance from it, diſcovers more, and has more, of a virtuous reſolution, than he, whoſe mind ſtands almoſt in an equipoiſe, and does but juſt abſtain. For ſince we become virtuous by a right application of our wills, the excellency of our virtues muſt be meaſured by the greater or leſs ſtrength of our reſolutions. And conſequently he, who by a ſtrong habit has made his virtue moſt natural and eaſy to him, is arrived to the greateſt perfection.

Drawn by the bent of the ethereal tide;

This is in alluſion to the *Carteſian* hypotheſis of *Vortices* or whirlpools of ſubtil matter. The myſtick ſenſe is this, that the higher a ſeraphick ſoul advances in the contemplation of the ſupreme good, the ſtronger he will find its attractions.

I know it well, it is my native home.

This Verſe, with the whole ſtanza, proceeds upon the *Platonick* hypotheſis of præ-exiſtence. I ſhall not here diſpute the problem. Thoſe that deſire to be ſatisfied concerning it, I refer to the works of that oracle of profound wiſdom and learning, the excellent Dr. *More*, to an ingenious treatiſe called *Lux Orientalis*; and to the account of *Origen*. In the mean while I hope the moſt rigid maintainer of orthodoxy will allow me the liberty of alluding to it as an hypotheſis; if not, I'm ſure the laws of poetry will. My buſineſs here was to imitate nature, and to repreſent how a ſoul would be affected in ſuch a caſe, ſuppoſing it true: Which I think I have not done amiſs. For ſo the ingenious platoniſt *Boethius*,

Huc te ſi reducem referat via,
Quam nunc requiris immemor,
Hæc dices, memini, patria eſt mihi,
Hinc ortus hic ſiſtam gradum.

'Tis one immenſe and ever flowing light.

My buſineſs was here to give a compendious deſcription of God. Now among all the repreſentations we have of him, I thought none ſo agreeable to the genius of poetry as a ſenſible one, and of all thoſe I could not find a better in all the inventory of the creation, than this of light. I ſhall not here endeavour a parallel; it may ſuffice to ſay,

ſay, that the repreſentation is warranted by authority, both human and divine. The ſchool of *Plato* repreſents God, under the ſimilitude of light, or lucid fountain; for that, I ſuppoſe, *Boethius* may be preſumed to mean by his *Fons Boni Lucidus*. And holy ſcripture goes farther, and ſays in expreſs terms, that *God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all*, 1 John i. 5.

The CURIOSITY.

I.

UNhappy ſtate of mortals here below,
Whom unkind Heaven does inſpire
With ſuch a conſtant, ſtrong deſire,
When they've ſuch ſlender faculties to know!
And yet we not content to bear the pain
Of thirſt unquench'd and fruitleſs love,
With one more curſe our ills improve,
And toil and drudge for what we ne'er can gain.

II.

With what ſtrange frenzy are we all poſſeſt,
Contented ignorance to refuſe,
And by laborious ſearch to loſe,
Not the enjoyment only, but our reſt!
Something like oar does on the ſurface ſhine,
We taken with the ſpecious ſhew,
With pains dig in the flattering mine,
But all alas in vain, truth lies more low.

III.

The greateſt knowledge we can ever gain
From ſtudying nature, books or men,
Serves juſt t' employ dull hours; but then
It yields leſs pleaſure than it coſts us pain.

Beſides, ſo ſhort and treacherous is our age,
No ſooner are we counted wiſe,
But envious death ſhuts up our eyes,
Juſt as our part is learnt, we quit the ſtage.

IV.

Could I among the nobler ſpirits find
One that would lay aſide his ſtate,
And be my kind confederate,
That ſuddainly I might enrich my mind;
'Twould be ſome pleaſure this, if happy I
Could once at eaſe ſit and ſurvey,
And my great victory enjoy,
And (not as now) ſtill labour on and dye.

The 114th PSALM *paraphraſed.*

I.

WHEN conquer'd by the plagues of *Moſes* rod,
The *Egyptian* tyrant gave command
That *Iſrael* ſhould depart his land,
Iſrael the choſen family of God.
Among them dwelt the Holy One,
Juda his ſanctuary, and *Iſrael* was his throne.

II.

The ſea beheld this ſcene, and did admire,
Each wave ſtood ſilently to ſee
The power of the Divinity;
They ſaw, and fled the dreadful guide of fire.
And *Jordan* too divided ſtood, [ing flood.
The prieſts the ſacred ark bore through the yield-

III.

Mount *Sinai* with great horror ſtruck and dread,
Forgot her weight, and in a trance
Like a light ram, did skip and dance;
She fear'd, and fain would hide her palſy head.

The

The hills their mother mountain ſaw, awe.
The little hills, and like young ſheep they ſtood in

IV.

What made thee to retreat, thou mighty ſea?
Tell me, for never any ſhore
Knew ſuch a wondrous tide before,
And thou great *Jordan*; ſay, what ailed thee?
Say, ſacred mount, what meant thy trance,
And you ſmall under-hills, why did you skip and [dance?

V.

You need not think it ſhame to own your fear;
What you diſmaid, the ſame would make
The univerſal fabrick ſhake;
The cauſe was great, for *Jacob's* God was there:
That God who did the rock ſubdue,
And made it melt in tears, tho' harder far than you.

The 148th PSALM *paraphraſed.*

I.

O Come, let all created force conſpire,
A general hymn of praiſe to ſing;
Join all ye creatures in one ſolemn quire,
And let your theme be Heaven's Almighty King.

II.

Begin ye bleſt attendants of his ſeat,
Begin your high ſeraphick lays,
'Tis juſt you ſhould, your happineſs is great,
And all you are to give again, is praiſe.

III.

Ye glorious lamps that rule both night and day,
Bring you your allelujahs too:
To him that tribute of devotion pay
Which once blind ſuperſtition gave to you.

IV.

Thou firſt and faireſt of material kind,
By whom his other works we ſee,
Subtile and active as pure thought and mind,
Praiſe him that's elder, and more fair than thee.

V.

Ye regions of the air, his praiſes ſing,
And all ye virgin waters there,
Do you advantage to the conſort bring,
And down to us the allelujah bear.

VI.

In chaunting forth the great Jehovah's praiſe,
Let theſe the upper conſort fill,
He ſpake, and did you all from nothing raiſe;
As you did then, ſo now obey his will.

VII.

His will, that fix'd you in a conſtant ſtate,
And cut a track for nature's wheel,
Here let it run ſaid he, and made it fate,
And where's that power which can this law repeal?

VIII.

Ye powers that to th' inferior world retain,
Join you now with the quire above.
And firſt ye dragons try an higher ſtrain,
And turn your angry hiſſings into praiſe and love.

IX.

Let fire, hail, ſnow, and vapours that aſcend,
Unlock'd by *Phœbus* ſearching rays,
Let ſtormy winds ambitiouſly contend,
And all their wonted force employ in praiſe.

X.

Ye ſacred tops which ſeem to brave the Skies,
Riſe higher, and when men on you
Religious rites perform and ſacrifice,
With their oblations ſend your praiſes too.

XI. Ye

XI.

Ye trees, whoſe fruits both men and beaſts conſume,
Be you in praiſes fruitful too;
Ye cedars, why have you ſuch choice perfume,
But that ſweet incenſe ſhould be made of you?

XII.

Ye beaſts with all the humble creeping train
Praiſe him that made your lot ſo high;
Ye birds, who in a nobler province reign,
Send up your praiſes higher than you fly.

XIII.

Ye ſacred heads, that wear Imperial gold,
Praiſe him that you with power arrays,
And you whoſe hands the ſcale of Juſtice hold
Be juſt in this, and pay your debt of praiſe.

XIV.

Let ſprightly youth give vigour to the quire,
Each ſex with one another vye;
Let feeble age diſſolv'd in praiſe expire,
And infants too in hymns their tender voices try.

XV.

Praiſe him ye ſaints who piety profeſs,
And at his altar ſpend your days;
Ye ſeed of *Iſrael* your great Patron bleſs,
'Tis *Manna* this, for Angels food is praiſe.

A PASTORAL *on the death of his Sacred Majeſty King* CHARLES *the Second.*

Menalcas, Thyrſis, *and* Daphnis.

Thyr. WHAT, ſad? *Menalcas:* Sure this pleaſant ſhade
Was ne'er for ſuch a mournful tenant made.
All things ſmile round thee, and throughout the grove
Nature diſplays a ſcene of joy and love.
But ſhepherd where's thy flock? ——
Sure they in ſome forbidden paſtures ſtray
Whilſt here in ſighs thou numb'reſt out the day.
Men. Ah, *Thyrſis*, thou could'ſt witneſs heretofore
What ſtrange affection to my flock I bore.
Thou know'ſt, my *Thyrſis*, the *Arcadian* plain
Could not afford a more induſtrious ſwain.
But I no longer now that mind retain.
Thyr. What change ſo great but what love's power can make?
Menalcas does his kids, and tender lambs forſake.
So I, when ſlave to *Galatea*'s eyes,
Did neither city nor the country prize,
But all their ſports, and my flock too deſpiſe.
Hang thou, my pipe, (ſaid I) on yonder tree,
For then (alas!) I had no taſte for melody.
Obſcurely in thick woods I ſate alone,
And ſigh'd in conſort to the turtles moan.
Men. 'Tis not fond love that cauſes my diſtreſs,
No, *Thyrſis*, you're miſtaken in your gueſs.
The glorious prize I have in triumph born,
I am no longer now *Alexis* ſcorn.
Or if I were, I now could be unmov'd,
At every ſcornful glance, nor care where e'er he lov'd.

A nearer grief preys on my ſpirits now;
And I beneath a heavier burthen bow.
The gentle God of the *Arcadian* plains,
Pan that regards the ſheep, *Pan* that regards the
Great *Pan* is dead——— [ſwains,
Throughout the fields the doleful tidings ran,
A ſwoon ſeiz'd all the ſhepherds at the death of *Pan*.
Of *Pan*——But ſee the reſt that tree will ſhew,
Which wears the ſad inſcription of my woe,
Where, with the bark my ſorrows too will grow.

Thyr. How, ſhepherd, is it by fame's trumpet ſaid
That *Pan* the beſt of all the Gods is dead?
Whom oft' w'ador'd, and whom becauſe we knew
As good as they, we thought him as immortal too.
'Tis ſtrange; but omens now I find are true.
In yonder copſe a ſhady Oak there ſtood,
Stately, well rooted, and it ſelf a wood;
Her branches o'er the inferior trees were ſpread,
Who all ador'd her as their ſovereign head:
Hither, when heated by the guide of day,
While their young wanton goats did skip and play,
Hither the ſwains would conſtantly repair,
Here ſing, and in the ample ſhade drink freſher air.
This tree when I my goats to paſture drove,
While all was clear above, and ſtill throughout
the grove,
Struck by ſome ſecret force fall down I ſaw,
The wood-nymphs all were ſeiz'd with wonder,
grief, and awe.
Nor had I left this ruin far behind
When lo (ſtrange ſight) a nightingale I find,
Which from briſk airs, enlivening all the grove,
Coo'd on a ſuddain like a mournful dove.
Amaz'd I ſtand, and on my pipe eſſay,
With ſome briſk ſong her ſorrows to allay.

But all in vain. She from the lofty tree
Kept on her ſad complaint, and mourn'd, and droop'd
like thee.
Men. And why theſe ſlighter things doſt thou relate?
Nature herſelf perceiv'd *Pan*'s mighty fate.
She fainted, when he drew his lateſt breath,
And almoſt ſympathiz'd with him to death.
Each field put on a languid dying face, [graſs.
The ſheep not minding food, with tears bedew'd the
The lyons too in tears their grief confeſt,
And ſavage bears, *Pan*'s enemies profeſt.
The nymphs all wept, and all the noble train
Of Deities that frequent the court of *Pan*.
Echo that long by nought but voice was known,
In ſounds repeated others woes, but wept her own.
Th' *Arcadians* mourn'd, and preſs'd beneath the
weighty care,
With cruelty they charg'd the Gods and ever Star.
Thyr. And well they might; Heaven could not
ſhew a Deity
More mild, more good t' his votaries than he.
He was all love, all peace, all clemency;
H' allur'd the love, and melted down the hate
Of all: He had no enemy but fate.
Pan kept the fields, from wolves ſecur'd the ſtall,
He guarded both the humble ſhrubs and cedars tall.
The ſummers heat obey'd *Pan*'s gentle hand,
And winter winds blew ſoft at his command,
He bleſt the ſwains with ſheep, and fruitful made
their land.
Weep, ſhepherds, and in pomp your grief expreſs,
The ground with flowers, your ſelves with cypreſs
dreſs.
Let the *Arcadians* in a ſolemn train [plain;
March ſlowly on, let mournful accents fill the
Do this at leaſt in memory of *Pan*.

Daph.

Daph. But why this vain expence of tears and breath?
D' ye think *Pan* loſt and ſwallow'd up in death?
He lives, and with a pleas'd and wondering eye
Contemplates the new beauties of the Sky.
Whence on theſe fields he caſts propitious rays,
Now greater than our ſorrow, greater than our praiſe.
I ſaw (for why mayn't I rehearſe the ſight)
Juſt as the Stars were kindled by the Queen of night,
Another new-made milky way appear,
I ſaw, and wonder'd what event it might prepare.
When lo great *Pan* amaz'd my trembling ſight,
As through th' æthereal plains he took his flight,
Deckt round with rays, and darting ſtreams of light.
Triumphant was his march, a ſacred throng
Of Gods inclos'd him, *Pan* was all their ſong,
The Sky ſtill brighten'd as they went along.
Men. Thy viſion be all truth ——
But who ſhall now the royal ſheep-crook hold,
Who patronize the fields, who now ſecure the fold?
Daph. Diſcharge that care, the royal ſtock does yield
Another *Pan* to patronize the field.
An heir of equal conduct does the ſceptre ſway,
One who long nurtured in the paſtoral way,
In peace will govern the *Arcadian* plains,
Defend the tender flocks, and chear the drooping ſwains.
Thyr. Come then, let's tune the pipe t'a brisker key,
Let's with a dance our ſorrows chaſe away,
And to new *Pan* in ſports devote the day.

SATIETY.

I.

HAſte on, dull time, thy winged minutes haſte,
I care not now how ſoon thou bring'ſt my laſt.
By what I've liv'd I plainly know,
The total ſumm of all below.
The days to come, altho' they promiſe more,
I know will be as falſe as thoſe that went before.

II.

The beſt of life tho' once enjoy'd, is vain,
And why ye powers the ſelf-ſame o'er again?
The comedy's ſo dull, I fear
'Twill not a ſecond acting bear.
No, I've enough; I cannot like the Sun [run.
Each day the ſelf-ſame ſtage, and ſtill unwearied,

III.

What cruel laws are theſe that me confine,
Thus ſtill to dig in a deceitful mine?
Be juſt, ye powers, my ſoul ſet free,
Give her her native liberty.
'Tis 'gainſt the ſtage's law to force my ſtay,
I've ſeen an act or two, and do not like the play.

The REPLY.

I.

SInce you deſire of me to know
Who's the wiſe man, I'll tell you who:
Not he whoſe rich and fertile mind
Is by the culture of the arts refin'd;

Who

Who as the Chaos of diſorder'd thought
By reaſon's light to form and method brought.
Who with a clear and piercing ſight,
Can ſee through niceties as dark as night.
You err, if you think this is he,
Tho' ſeated on the top of the *Porphyrian* tree.

II.

Nor is it he to whom kind Heaven
A ſecret *Cabala* has given
T' unriddle the myſterious text
Of Nature, with dark comments more perplext.
Or to decypher her clean writ and fair,
But moſt confounding puzzling character.
That can through all her windings trace
This ſlippery wanderer, and unveil her face.
Her inmoſt mechaniſm view, [through.
Anatomize each part, and ſee her through and

III.

Nor he that does the ſcience know,
Our only certainty below,
That can from problems dark and nice
Deduce truths worthy of a ſacrifice.
Nor he that can confeſs the Stars and ſee
What's writ in the black leaves of Deſtiny.
That knows their laws, and how the Sun
His daily and his annual ſtage does run;
As if he did to them diſpenſe
Their motions, and there ſate ſupream intelligence.

IV.

Nor is it he (although he boaſt
Of wiſdom, and ſeem wiſe to moſt)
Yet 'tis not he whoſe buſy pate
Can dive into the deep intrigues of ſtate.
That can the great *Leviathan* controul,
Manage and rule't, as if he were its ſoul.

T!

The wiſeſt King thus gifted was,
And yet did not in theſe true wiſdom place.
Who then is by the wiſe man meant?
He that can want all this, and yet can be content.

My ESTATE.

I.

HOW do I pity that proud wealthy clown.
That does with ſcorn on my low ſtate look down!
Thy vain contempt, dull earth-worm, ceaſe,
I won't for refuge fly to this,
That none of Fortune's bleſſings can
Add any value to the man.
This all the wiſe acknowledge to be true;
But know I am as rich, more rich than you.

II.

While you a ſpot of earth poſſeſs with care,
Below the notice of the Geographer,
I by the freedom of my ſoul
Poſſeſs, nay more, enjoy the whole;
To th' Univerſe a claim I lay;
Your writings ſhew, perhaps you'll ſay,
That's your dull way, my title runs more high,
'Tis by the charter of Philoſophy.

III.

From that a firmer title I derive,
Than all your courts of law could ever give.
A title that more firm doth ſtand
Than does even your very land,
And yet ſo generous and free
That none will e'er bethink it me,

Since

Since my poſſeſſions tend to no man's loſs ;
I all enjoy, yet nothing I ingroſs.

IV.

Throughout the works divine I caſt my eye,
Admire their beauty, and their harmony.
I view the glorious Hoſt above,
And him that made them, praiſe and love.
The flow'ry meads and fields beneath,
Delight me with their odorous breath.
Thus, is my joy by you not underſtood,
Like that of God, when he ſaid, *All was good.*

V.

Nay (what you'd think leſs likely to be true)
I can enjoy what's yours much more than you.
Your meadow's beauty I ſurvey,
Which you priſe only for its hay.
There can I ſit beneath a tree,
And write an Ode or Elegy.
What to you care, does to me pleaſure bring,
You own the cage, I in it ſit and ſing.

The CONQUEST.

I.

IN power or wiſdom to contend with thee,
Great God, who but a *Lucifer* would dare ?
Our ſtrength is but infirmity,
And when we this perceive our ſight's moſt clear :
But yet I will not be excell'd, thought I,
In love, in love I'll with my Maker vye.

II.

I view'd the glories of thy ſeat above,
And thought of every grace and charm divine,
And farther to increaſe my love,
I meaſur'd all the heights and depths of thine.

Thus

Thus there broke forth a ſtrong and vigorous flame,
And almoſt melted down my mortal frame.

III.

But when thy bloody ſweat and death I view,
I own (dear Lord) the conqueſt of thy love,
Thou doſt my higheſt flights outdo,
I in a lower orb, and ſlower move.
Thus in this ſtrife's a double weakneſs ſhewn,
Thy love I cannot equal, nor yet bear my own.

The IMPATIENT.

I.

WHAT envious laws are thoſe of Fate,
Which fix a gulph (bleſt ſouls) 'twixt us and you!
How 'twould refreſh and chear our mortal ſtate,
When our dejected looks confeſs
The emptineſs of earthly bliſs, [view!
Could we in this black night your brighter glories

II.

Vain comfort when I thus complain
To hear the wiſe and ſolemn gravely ſay,
Your grief and curioſity reſtrain,
Death will e'er long this bar remove,
And bring you to the bleſt above, [ſtay.
Till then with this great proſpect all your longings

III.

But ah the joy peculiar here
Does from the greater excellence ariſe,
'Twill be worth nothing in an equal ſphere.
Let me your noble converſe have,
Bleſt Spirits, on this ſide the grave,
I ſhall hereafter be as great as you, as wiſe.

IV.

IV.

Beſides, when plung'd in bliſs divine
I ſhall not taſte, nor need this leſſer joy.
What comfort then does from this proſpect ſhine?
'Tis juſt as if in depth of night
You rob a Traveller of his light,
And promiſe to reſtor't when 'tis clear day.

CONTENT.

I.

I Bleſs my Stars I envy none,
Not great, nor wealthy, no nor yet the wiſe,
I've learnt the art to like my own,
And what I can't attain to, not to priſe.
Vaſt tracts of learning I deſcry
Beyond the ſphere perhaps of my activity,
And yet I'm ne'er the more concern'd at this,
Than for the gems that lie in the profound abyſs.

II.

Should I my proper lot diſdain
As long as farther good eclipſes mine,
I may t' Eternity complain,
And in the manſions of the bleſt repine.
There ſhall I numbers vaſt eſpy
Of forms more excellent, more wiſe, more bleſt than I.
I ſhall not then lament m' unequal fate.
And why ſhould larger proſpects now moleſt my ſtate?

III.

Where all in equal ſtations move,
What place for harmony can there be found?
The lower ſpheres with thoſe above
Agree, and dance as free and briskly round.

Degrees

Degrees of eſſences conſpire,
As well as various notes, t'accompliſh Heaven's quire.
Thus would I have't below, nor will I care
So the reſult be harmony, what part I bear.

Againſt KNOWLEDGE.

I.

WELL, let it be the cenſure of the wiſe,
That wiſdom none but fools deſpiſe:
I like not what they gravely preach,
And muſt another doctrine teach.
Since all's ſo falſe and vain below,
There's nought ſo indiſcreet as this, to know.

II.

The thoughtleſs, dull, and leſs diſcerning mind,
No flaws in earthly joys can find,
He cloſes with what courts his ſight,
All coin will paſs by his dim light.
Though often baulk'd, he hopes for reſt,
Sleeps on and dreams, and is in error bleſt.

III.

But he that has refin'd and high-rais'd ſenſe,
Can nothing taſte but excellence.
Nor can he nature's faults ſupply,
By fancy's happy imag'ry.
He ſees that all fruition's vain,
Can't taſte the preſent, nor yet truſt again.

IV.

Our joys, like tricks, do all on cheats depend,
And when once known, are at an end.
Happy and wiſe, two bleſſings are
Which meet not in this mortal ſphere;
Let me be ignorant below,
And when I've ſolid good, then let me know.

Seeing

Seeing a great Perſon lying in ſtate.

I.

WELL, now I needs muſt own,
That I hate greatneſs more and more;
'Tis now a juſt abhorrence grown
What was antipathy before:
With other ills I could diſpenſe,
And acquieſce in Providence.
But let not Heaven my patience try
With this one plague, leſt I repine and dye.

II.

I knew indeed before,
That 'twas the great man's wretched fate,
While with the living to endure
The vain impertinence of ſtate;
But ſure, thought I, in death he'll be
From that and other troubles free:
What e'er his life, he then will lie
As free, as undiſturb'd, as calm as I.

III.

But 'twas a groſs miſtake;
Honour, that too officious ill,
Won't even his breathleſs corps forſake,
But haunts and waits about him ſtill,
Strange perſecution, when the grave
Can't the diſtreſſed Martyr ſave!
What remedy can there avail,
Where death the great Catholicon does fail?

IV.

Thanks to my Stars that I
Am with ſo low a fortune bleſt,
That whate'er bleſſings Fate deny,
I'm ſure of privacy and reſt.

'Tis well; thus long I am content,
And reſt as in my element.
Then Fate, if you'll appear my friend,
Force me not 'gainſt my nature to aſcend.

V.

No, I would ſtill be low,
Or elſe I would be very high,
Beyond the ſtate which mortals know,
A kind of Semi-deity.
So of the regions of the air,
The high'ſt and loweſt quiet are,
But 'tis this middle height I fear,
For ſtorms and thunder are ingendred there.

Second Chapter of the Cant. *from Verſe* 10. *to* 13.

I.

'TWas my beloved ſpake, [ſay,
I know his charming voice, I heard him
Riſe up my love, my faireſt one awake,
Awake and come away.

II.

The winter all is paſt
And ſtormy winds that with ſuch rudeneſs blew,
The Heavens are no longer overcaſt,
But try to look like you.

III.

The flowers their ſweets diſplay,
The Birds in ſhort preludiums tune their throat,
The turtle in low murmurs does eſſay
Her melancholy note.

IV.

IV.

The fruitful vineyards make
An odorous ſmell, the fig looks freſh and gay,
Ariſe, my love, my faireſt one awake,
Awake and come away.

To a Friend in Honour.

I.

SOme thoughtleſs heads perhaps admire to ſee
That I ſo little to your titles bow;
But wonder not, my friend; I ſwear, to me
You were as great before as now.
Honour to you does nothing give,
Tho' from your worth much luſtre ſhe receive.

II.

Your native glory does ſo far out-do
That of the ſphere wherein you move,
That I can nothing but your ſelf in you
Obſerve, admire, eſteem or love.
You are a diamond ſet in gold,
The curious, the rich ſtone, not this behold.

III.

All that to your late honour you can owe
Is only that you're brought in view;
You don't begin to have, but men to know,
Your votaries are increas'd, not you.
So the Sun's height add's not t' his light,
But only does expoſe him more to ſight.

IV.

To ſome whoſe native worth more dimly ſhin'd
Honour might ſome improvement give,
As metals which the Sun has leſs refin'd
A value from their ſtamp receive.

But you, like gold, paſs for no more
Tho' ſtamp'd, than for your weight you wou'd before.

A Divine Hymn on the CREATION.

I.

AWake, my lyre, and thy ſweet forces joyn
With me to ſing an hymn divine,
Let both our ſtrains in pleaſing numbers flow;
But ſee, thy ſtrings with tedioufneſs and pain
Ariſe into a tuneful ſtrain,
How canſt thou ſilent lye?
The univerſe is harmony,
Awake, and move by ſympathy,
My heart's already tun'd, O why art thou ſo ſlow!

II.

Jehovah is our theme, th'eternal King,
Whoſe praiſe admiring Angels ſing,
They ſee with ſteddy and attentive eyes
His naked beauties, and from viſion raiſe
To wondrous heights their love and praiſe.
We mortals only view
His back-parts, and that darkly too,
We muſt fall ſhort, what ſhall we do,
But neither too can they up to his grandeur riſe.

III.

No power can juſtly praiſe him but muſt be
As great, as infinite as he,
He comprehends his boundleſs ſelf alone,
Created minds too ſhallow are and dim
His works to fathom, much more him.
Our praiſe at height will be
Short by a whole infinity,
Of all his glorious Deity,
He cannot have the full, and ſtands in need of none.

IV. He

IV.

He can't be leſs, nor can he more receive,
But ſtands one fix'd ſuperlative.
He's in himſelf compendiouſly bleſt;
We, acted by the weights of ſtrong deſire,
To good without our ſelves aſpire,
We're always moving hence
Like lines from the circumference,
To ſome more in-lodg'd excellence.
But he is one unmov'd ſelf-center'd point of reſt.

V.

Why then, if full of bliſs that ne'er could cloy,
Would he do ought but ſtill enjoy?
Why not indulge his ſelf-ſufficing ſtate,
Live to himſelf at large, calm and ſecure,
A wiſe eternal epicure?
Why ſix days work to frame
A monument of praiſe and fame
To him whoſe bliſs is ſtill the ſame?
What need the wealthy coin, or he that's bleſt create?

VI.

Almighty love the faireſt gem that ſhone
All-round, and half made up his throne,
His favourite and darling excellence,
Whom oft he would his royal virtue ſtyle,
And view with a peculiar ſmile,
Love mov'd him to create
Beings that might participate
Of their Creator's happy ſtate,
And that good which he could not heighten, to diſ-[pence.

VII.

How large thy empire, love, how great thy ſway!
Omnipotence does thee obey.
What complicated wonders in thee ſhine!
He that t' infinity it ſelf is great
Has one way to be greater yet;

Love will the method ſhew,
'Tis to impart; what is't that thou
O ſovereign paſſion can'ſt not do?
Thou mak'ſt divinity it ſelf much more divine.

VIII.

With pregnant love full fraught, the great Three-one
Would now no longer be alone.
Love, gentle love, unlockt his fruitful breaſt,
And 'woke th'ideas which there dormant lay.
Awak'd, their beauties they diſplay:
Th' Almighty ſmil'd to ſee
The comely form and harmony
Of his eternal imag'ry; [bleſt.
He ſaw 'twas good and fair, and th' infant platform

IX.

Ye ſeeds of being, in whoſe fair boſoms dwell
The forms of all things poſſible;
Ariſe, and your prolifick force diſplay;
Let a fair iſſue in your moulds be caſt
To fill in part this empty waſte.
He ſpake. The empty ſpace
Immediately in travail was,
And ſoon brought forth a formleſs maſs,
Firſt matter came undreſs'd, ſhe made ſuch haſte
t' obey.

X.

But ſoon a plaſtick ſpirit did ferment
The liquid dusky element.
The maſs harmoniouſly begins to move,
Let there be light, ſaid God; 'twas ſaid and done,
The maſs dipt through with brightneſs ſhone.
Nature was pleas'd to ſee
This feature of Divinity,
Th' Almighty ſmil'd as well as ſhe, [love.
He own'd his likeneſs there, and did his firſt-born

XI. But

XI.

But lo, I ſee a goodly frame ariſe
Vaſt folding orbs, and azure Skies,
With lucid whirlpools the vaſt arch does ſhine,
The Sun by day ſhews to each world his light,
The Stars ſtand centinel by night.
In midſt of all is ſpread
That pondrous bulk whereon we tread,
But where is its foundation laid?
'Tis pompous all and great, and worthy hands divine.

XII.

Thy temple's built, great God, but where is he
That muſt admire both it and thee?
Ope one ſcene more, my muſe, bleſs and adore,
See there in ſolemn council and debate
The great divine triumvirate.
The reſt one word obey'd,
'Twas done almoſt before 'twas ſaid;
But man was not ſo cheaply made, [more.
To make the world was great, but t' epitomize it

XIII.

Th' accompliſh'd work ſtands his ſevere review
Whoſe judgment's moſt exactly true.
In nature's book, where no errata's found,
All things are good, ſaid God, they anſwer well
Th' ideas which within me dwell;
Th' angelick voices join
Their praiſe to the applauſe divine,
The morning Stars in hymns combine,
And as they ſung and play'd, the jocant orbs danc'd

XIV. [round.

With this thy quire divine, great God, I bring
My Euchariſtick offering.
I cannot here ſing more exalted lays,
But what's defective now I will ſupply
When I enjoy thy Deity.

Then may'ſt thou ſleep, my lyre,
I ſhall not then thy help require,
Diviner thoughts will then me fire
Than thou, tho' play'd on by an Angel's hand,
can'ſt raiſe.

PLATO's *two* CUPIDS.

I.

THE heart of man's a living butt,
At which two different archers ſhoot,
Their ſhafts are pointed both with fire,
Both wound our hearts with hot deſire.

II.

In this they differ, he that lies
A ſacrifice to his miſtreſs eyes,
In pain does live, in pain expire,
And melts and drops before the fire,

III.

But he that flames with love divine,
Does not in th' heat conſume, but ſhine.
H' enjoys the fire that round him lies,
Serenely lives, ſerenely dyes.

IV.

So Devils and damned ſouls in Hell
Fry in the fire with which they dwell;
But Angels ſuffer not the ſame,
Although their vehicles be flame.

V.

The heart whoſe fire's divine and chaſte,
Is like the buſh that did not waſte.
Moſes beheld the flame with fear,
That waſted not, for God was there.

A Wish.

I.

Whatever bleſſing you my life deny,
Grant me, kind Heaven, this one thing when I dye.
I charge thee guardian ſpirit hear,
And as thou lov'ſt me, further this my prayer.

II.

When I'm to leave this groſſer ſphere, and try
Death, that amazing curioſity,
When juſt about to breathe my laſt.
Then when no mortal joy can ſtrike my taſte:

III.

Let me ſoft melting ſtrains of muſick hear,
Whoſe dying ſounds may ſpeak death to my ear;
Gently the bands of life unty,
Till in ſweet raptures I diſſolve and dye.

IV.

How ſoft and eaſie my new birth will be
Help'd on by muſick's gentle midwifery!
And I who 'midſt theſe charms expire,
Shall bring a ſoul well tun'd to Heaven's quire.

To Dr. More. An Ode.

I.

Go, Muſe, go haſten to the cell of fame,
(Thou know'ſt her reverend awful ſeat,
It ſtands hard by your bleſt retreat)
Go with a brisk alarm aſſault her ear,
Bid her her loudeſt trump prepare;
To ſound a more than human name,
A name more excellent and great
Than ſhe could ever publiſh yet;

Tell

Tell her ſhe need not ſtay till Fate ſhall give
A licenſe to his works, and bid them live,
His worth now ſhines through envy's baſe alloy,
'Twill fill her wideſt trump, and all her breath employ.

II.

Learning, which long like an enchanted land,
Did human force and art defie,
And ſtood the virtuoſo's beſt artillery,
Which nothing mortal could ſubdue,
Has yielded to this hero's fatal hand,
By him is conquer'd, held, and peopled too.
Like ſeas that border on the ſhore
The Muſes ſuburbs ſome poſſeſſion knew,
But like the deep abyſs their inner ſtore
Lay unpoſſeſs'd, till ſeiz'd and own'd by you:
Truth's outer courts were trod before,
Sacred was her receſs, that Fate reſerv'd for *More*.

III.

Others in learning's chorus bear their part
And the great work diſtinctly ſhare:
Thou our great catholick profeſſor art,
All ſcience is annex'd to thy unerring chair.
Some leſſer ſynods of the wiſe
The Muſes kept in univerſities;
But never yet till in thy ſoul
Had they a council œcumenical,
An abſtract they'd a mind to ſee
Of all their ſcatter'd gifts, and ſumm'd them up in thee.
Thou haſt the arts whole Zodiack run,
And fathom'ſt all that here is known.
Strange reſtleſs curioſity,
Adam himſelf came ſhort of thee,
He taſted of the fruit, thou bear'ſt away the tree.

IV. Whilſt

IV.

Whilſt to be great the moſt aſpire,
Or with low ſouls to raiſe their fortunes higher,
Knowledge the chiefeſt treaſure of the bleſt,
Knowledge the wiſe man's beſt requeſt,
Was made thy choice, for this thou haſt declin'd
A life of noiſe, impertinence and ſtate;
And whate'er elſe the Muſes hate;
And mad'ſt it thy own buſineſs to inrich thy mind.
How calm thy life, how eaſie, how ſecure,
Thou intellectual epicure.
Thou as another *Solomon* haſt try'd
All nature through, and nothing to thy ſoul deny'd.
Who can two ſuch examples ſhew? [know.
He all things try'd t'enjoy, and you all things to

V.

By *Babel*'s curſe, and our contracted ſpan,
Heaven thought to check the ſwift career of man.
And ſo it prov'd till now, our age
Is much too ſhort to run ſo long a ſtage.
And to learn words is ſuch a vaſt delay,
That we're benighted e'er we come half way.
Thou with unuſual haſte driv'ſt on,
And doſt even time it ſelf out-run.
No hindrance can retard thy courſe,
Thou rid'ſt the Muſes winged horſe.
Thy ſtage of learning ends e'er that of life be done.
There's now no work left for thy accompliſh'd mind,
But to ſurvey thy conqueſts, and inform mankind.

The Paſſion of the VIRGIN MOTHER, *beholding the Crucifixion of her Divine* SON.

I.

NIgh to the fatal, and yet ſovereign wood,
Which crouds of wondring Angels did ſurround,
Devoutly ſad the Holy Mother ſtood,
And view'd her Son, and ſympathiz'd with every wound.

II.

Angelick piety in her mournful face,
Like rays of light, through a watry cloud did ſhine;
Two mighty paſſions in her breaſt took place,
And like her Son, ſh' appear'd half human, half divine.

III.

She ſaw a blacker and more tragick ſcene
Than e'er the Sun before, or then would ſee;
In vain did nature draw her dusky ſcreen,
She ſaw, and wept, and felt the dreadful agony.

IV.

Grief in the abſtract ſure can riſe no higher
Than that which this deep tragedy did move;
She ſaw in tortures and in ſhame, expire
Her Son, her God, her worſhip and her love.

V.

That ſacred head, which all divine and bright,
Struck with deep awe the votaries of the Eaſt,
To which a Star paid tributary light,
Which the (then joyful) Mother kiſs'd, ador'd and bleſt.

VI. That

VI.

That head which Angels with pure light had [crown'd,
Where wiſdom's ſeat and oracle was plac'd;
Whoſe air divine threw his traitors to the ground,
She ſaw with pointed circles of rude thorns embrac'd.

VII.

Thoſe hands whoſe ſoeverign touch werewont toheal
All wounds and hurts that others did endure,
Did now the piercings of rough iron feel,
Nor could the wounded heart of his ſad Mother cure.

VIII.

No, no, it bled to ſee his body torn
With nails, and deck'd with gems of purple gore,
On four great wounds to ſee him rudely born,
Whom oft her arms a happy burthen found before.

IX.

It bled to hear that voice of grief and dread,
Which the earth's pillars and foundations ſhook;
Which rent the rocks, and 'woke the ſleeping dead,
My God, my God, O why, why haſt thou me for- [ſook?

X.

And can the tide of ſorrow riſe more high?
Her melting face ſtood thick with tears to view,
Like thoſe of Heaven his ſetting glories dye,
As flowers left by the ſun are charg'd with evening [dew.

XI.

But ſee grief ſpreads her empire ſtill more wide,
Another ſpring of tears begins to flow,
A barbarous hand wounds his now ſenſleſs ſide;
And death that ends the Son's, renews the Mother's [woe.

XII.

She ſees now by the rude inhuman ſtroke
The myſtick river flow, and in her breaſt
Wonders, by what ſtrange figure th' Angel ſpoke,
When amongſt all the daughters he pronounc'd her bleſt.

XIII. Thus

XIII.

Thus far did nature, pity, grief and love,
And all the paſſions their ſtrong efforts try,
But ſtill tho' dark below, 'twas clear above,
She had (as once her Son) her ſtrengthning Angel by.

XIV.

Gabriel the chiefeſt of th' Almighty's train
That firſt with happy tidings bleſt her ear,
Th' Archangel *Gabriel*, was ſent again,
To ſtem the tide of grief, and qualifie her fear.

XV.

A large proſpective wrought by hands divine
He ſet before her firſt enlightned eye,
'Twas hewn out of the Heaven Criſtalline,
One of whoſe ends did leſſen, th' other magnifie.

XVI.

With that his ſufferings he expos'd to ſight,
With this his glories he did repreſent,
The weight of this made th' other ſeem but light,
She ſaw the mighty odds, ador'd, and was content.

DAMON *and* PYTHYAS: *Or, Friendſhip in Perfection.*

I.

Pyth. 'TIS true (my *Damon*) we as yet have been
Patterns of conſtant love, I know;
We've ſtuck ſo cloſe no third could come between:
But will it (*Damon*) will it ſtill be ſo?

II.

Da. Keep your love true, I dare engage that mine
Shall like my ſoul immortal prove.
In friendſhip's orb how brightly ſhall we ſhine
Where all ſhall envy, none divide our love!

III. *Pyth.*

III.

Pyth. Death will; when once (as 'tis by fate de-
ſign'd)
T'Elyſium you ſhall be remov'd,
Such ſweet companions there no doubt you'll find,
That you'll forget that *Pythias* e'er you lov'd.

IV.

Da. No, baniſh all ſuch fears; I then will be
Your friend and guardian Angel too.
And tho' with more refin'd ſociety
I'll leave Elyſium to converſe with you.

V.

Pyth. But grant that after fate you ſtill are kind,
You cannot long continue ſo;
When I, like you, become all thought and mind,
By what mark then ſhall we each other know?

VI.

Da. With care on your laſt hour I will attend,
And leſt like ſouls ſhould me deceive,
I cloſely will embrace my new-born friend,
And never after my dear *Pythias* leave.

The INDIFFERENCY.

I.

WHether 'tis from ſtupidity or no,
I know not; but I ne'er could find
Why I one thought or paſſion ſhould beſtow
On fame, that gaudy idol of mankind.
Call me not Stoick; no, I can purſue
Things excellent with as much zeal as you:
But here I own my ſelf to be
A very lukewarm votary.

II. Should

II.

Should thouſand excellencies in me meet,
And one bright conſtellation frame,
'Tis ſtill as mens phantaſtick humours hit
Whether I'm written in the book of fame.
So tho' the Sun be ne'er ſo fair and bright,
And ſhine with free, uninterrupted light,
'Tis as the clouds diſpoſed are,
E'er he can paint his image there.

III.

The world is ſeldom to true merit juſt,
Through envy or through ignorance,
True worth, like valour, oft lies hid in duſt,
Whilſt ſome falſe hero's grac'd with a romance.
The true God's altar oft neglected lies,
When Idols have perfumes and ſacrifice.
And tho' the true one ſome adore,
Yet thoſe that do blaſpheme, are more.

IV.

Yet grant that merit were of fame ſecure,
What's reputation, what is praiſe?
Who'd one day's toil, or ſleepleſs night endure,
Such a vain *Babel* of eſteem to raiſe?
Pleas'd with his hidden worth, the great and wiſe
Can, like his God, this foreign good deſpiſe;
Whoſe happineſs would ne'er be leſs,
Tho' none were made to praiſe or bleſs.

V.

Even I who dare not rank my ſelf with thoſe
Who pleas'd, into themſelves retire,
Find yet in great applauſes leſs repoſe,
And do fame leſs, leſs than my ſelf admire.
Let her loud trumpet ſound me far and near,
Th' *Antipodes* will never of me hear.
Or were I known throughout this ball,
I've but a point, when I have all.

VI. Then

VI.

Then as for glory which comes after fate,
All that can then of me be ſaid,
I value leaſt of all, it comes too late,
'Tis like th' embalming of the ſenſleſs dead.
Others with pleaſure, what me labour coſt
May read, and praiſe; but to me all is loſt.
Juſt as the Sun no joy does find
In that his light, which chears mankind.

VII.

Or ſhould I after fate has clos'd my eyes,
Should I my living glories know,
My wiſer, improv'd ſoul will then deſpiſe
All that poor mortals ſay or think below.
Even they who of mens ignorance before
Complain'd, becauſe few did their works adore,
Will then the ſelf-ſame cenſure raiſe,
Not from their ſilence, but their praiſe.

VIII.

Or grant 'twou'd pleaſure bring to know that I
After my death live ſtill in fame;
Thoſe that admire me too muſt ſhortly dye,
And then where's my memorial, where my name?
My fame, tho' longer liv'd, yet once ſhall have
Like me, its death, its funeral, its grave.
This only difference will remain,
I ſhall, that never riſe again.

IX.

Death and deſtruction ſhall e'er long deface
The world, the work of hands divine;
What pillars then, or monuments of braſs
Shall from the general ruin reſcue mine?
All then ſhall equal be; I care not then
To be a while the talk and boaſt of men.
This only grant, that I may be
Prais'd by thy Angels, Lord, and thee.

The INFIRMITY.

I.

IN other things I ne'er admir'd to ſee
Men injur'd by extremity.
But little thought in happineſs
There might be danger of exceſs.
At leaſt I thought there was no fear
Of ever meeting with too much on't here.

II.

But now theſe melting ſounds ſtrike on my ſenſe
With ſuch a powerful excellence;
I find that happineſs may be
Screw'd up to ſuch extremity,
That our too feeble faculties
May not be ſaid t' enjoy, but ſuffer bliſs.

III.

So frail's our mortal ſtate, we can ſuſtain
A mighty bliſs no more than pain.
We loſe our weak precarious breath
Tortur'd or tickled unto death.
As Sprights and Angels alike fright
With too much horror, or with too much light.

IV.

Alas! I'm over-pleas'd, what ſhall I do
The painful joy to undergo?
Temper your too melodious ſong,
Your doſe of bliſs is much too ſtrong;
Like thoſe that too rich cordials have,
It don't ſo much revive, as make me rave.

V.

What cruelty 'twould be ſtill to confine
A mortal ear to airs divine?

The

The curſe of *Cain* you have on me
Inverted by your harmony;
For ſince with that you charm'd my ear,
My bliſs is much too great for me to bear.

VI.

Relieve this paroxyſm of delight,
And let it be leſs exquiſite,
Let down my ſoul; 'tis too high ſet;
I am not ripe for Heaven yet.
Give me a region more beneath,
This element's too fine for me to breathe.

The ARREST.

I.

WHither ſo faſt, fond paſſion, doſt thou rove,
Licentious and unconfin'd?
Sure this is not the proper ſphere of love;
Obey, and be not deaf, as thou art blind.
All is ſo falſe and treacherous here,
That I muſt love with caution, and enjoy with fear.

II.

Contract thy ſails, leſt a too guſty blaſt
Make thee from ſhoar launch out too far;
Weigh well this ocean, e'er thou make ſuch haſte,
It has a nature very ſingular.
Men of the treacherous ſhoar complain
In other ſeas, but here moſt danger's in the main.

III.

Should'ſt thou, my ſoul, indulge thy forward love,
And not controul its headlong courſe,
The object in th' enjoyment vain will prove,
And thou on nothing fall with all thy force.

So th' eager Hawk makes ſure of's prize,
Strikes with full might, but over-ſhoots himſelf and dies.

IV.

Or ſhouldſt thou with long ſearch on ſomething light
That might content and ſtay thy mind,
All good's here wing'd, and ſtands prepar'd for flight,
'Twill leave thee reaching out in vain, behind.
Then when unconſtant fate thou'ſt prov'd,
Thou'lt ſigh and ſay with Tears, I wiſh I ne'er had lov'd.

V.

Well then, ye ſofter Powers, that love command
And wound our breaſts with pleaſing ſmart,
Gage well your launce, and bear a ſteady hand,
Leſt it run in too deep into my heart.
Or if you're fix'd in your deſign
Deeply to wound my heart, wound it with love divine.

To the Memory of my dear Neece, M. C.

I.

BY tears to eaſe my grief I've try'd,
And philoſophick med'cines have apply'd;
From books and company I've ſought relief,
I've us'd all ſpells and charms of art
To lay this troubler of my heart;
I have, yet I'm ſtill haunted by my grief.
Theſe give ſome eaſe, but yet I find
'Tis poetry at laſt muſt cure my mind.

II. Come

II.

Come then, t'aſſwage my pain I'll try
By the ſweet magick of thy harmony.
Begin, my Muſe, but 'twill be hard I know
For thee my genius to ſcrew
To heights that to my theme are due,
The weight of grief has ſet my ſoul ſo low.
To grace her death my ſtrains ſhould be
As far above mortality as ſhe.

III.

Is ſhe then dead, and can it be
That I can live to write her elegy?
I hop'd, ſince 'twas not to my ſoul deny'd
To ſympathize in all the pain
Which ſhe tho' long did well ſuſtain,
T' have carry'd on the ſympathy, and dy'd.
But death was ſo o'erpleas'd, I ſee,
At this rich ſpoil, that ſhe neglected me.

IV.

Yet has ſh' of all things made me bare,
But life, nor was it kindneſs here to ſpare.
So when th' Almighty would t' inform mankind
His eaſtern Hero's patience try
With the extreams of miſery;
He gave this charge to the malicious fiend;
Of all life's bleſſings him deprive,
Vex him with all thy plagues, but let him live.

V.

Yet will I live (ſweet ſoul) to ſave
Thy name, ſince thee I cannot from the grave.
I will not of this burthen life complain
Tho' tears than verſes faſter flow,
Tho' I am plung'd in grief and woe,
And like th' inſpired Sibylls write in pain.
To dye for friends is thought to be
Heroick, but I'll life endure for thee.

VI.

'Tis juſt, ſince I in thee did live,
That thou ſhouldſt life and fame from me receive.
But how ſhall I this debt of juſtice pay?
The colours of my poetry
Are all too dead to copy thee,
'Twill be abuſe the beſt that I can ſay.
Nature that wrought thy curious frame
Will find it hard to draw again the ſame.

VII.

In council the Almighty ſate
When he did man, his maſterpiece create.
His agent nature did the ſame for thee;
In making thee ſhe wrought for fame,
And with ſlow progreſs drew thy frame,
As he that painted for eternity.
In her beſt mould ſhe did thee caſt,
But thou waſt over-wrought, and made too fine to [laſt.

VIII.

Thy ſoul, the ſaint of this fair ſhrine,
Was pure without alloy, and all divine.
Active and nimble as æthereal light,
Kind as the Angels are above,
Who live on harmony and love;
The rays thou ſhott'ſt were warm, as well as bright:
So mild, ſo pleaſing was thy fire
That none could envy, and all muſt admire.

IX.

Sickneſs, to whoſe ſtrong ſiege reſign
The beſt of natures, did but ſet forth thine.
Wiſely thou didſt thy paſſions all controul,
And like a martyr in the fire
Devout and patient didſt expire,
Pains could expel, but not untune thy ſoul.
Thou bor'ſt them all ſo moderately [thee.
As if thou mean'ſt to teach how I ſhould mourn for

X. No

X.

No wonder ſuch a noble mind
Her way again to Heaven ſo ſoon could find.
Angels, as 'tis but ſeldom they appear,
So neither do they make long ſtay,
They do but viſit and away.
'Tis pain for them t' endure our too groſs ſphere.
We could not hope for a reprieve,
She muſt dye ſoon, that made ſuch haſte to live.

XI.

Heaven did thy lovely preſence want,
And therefore did ſo early thee tranſplant.
Not 'cauſe he dar'd not truſt thee longer here,
No, ſuch ſweet innocence as thine
To take a ſtain was too divine,
But ſure he coveted to have thee there;
For meaner ſouls he could delay,
Impatient for thine, he would not ſtay.

XII.

The Angels too did covet thee,
T' advance their love, their bliſs, their harmony.
They'd lately made an anthem to their King,
An anthem which contain'd a part
All ſweet, and full of heavenly art,
Which none but thy harmonious ſoul could ſing.
'Twas all Heaven's vote thou ſhouldſt be gone
To fill th' Almighty's choir, and to adorn his throne.

XIII.

Others when gone t' eternal reſt
Are ſaid t' augment the number of the bleſt.
Thou doſt their very happineſs improve,
Out of the croud they ſingle thee,
Fond of thy ſweet ſociety,
Thou waſt our darling, and art ſo above.
Why ſhould we of thy loſs complain,
Which is not only thine, but Heaven's gain?

XIV.

There doſt thou ſit in bliſs and light,
Whilſt I thy praiſe in mournful numbers write.
There doſt thou drink at pleaſure's virgin ſpring,
And find'ſt no leiſure in thy bliſs
Ought to admire below, but this.
How can I mourn, when thou doſt anthems ſing?
Thy pardon, my ſweet Saint, I implore,
My ſoul ne'er diſconform'd from thine before.

XV.

Nor will I now: My tears ſhall flow
No more, I will be bleſt 'cauſe thou art ſo.
I'll borrow comfort from thy happy ſtate,
In bliſs I'll ſympathize with thee
As once I did in miſery,
And by reflection will be fortunate.
I'll practiſe now what's done above,
And by thy happy ſtate my own improve.

The RESIGNATION.

I.

LOng have I view'd, long have I thought,
And held with trembling hand this bitter draught:
'Twas now juſt to my lips apply'd,
Nature ſhrank in, and all my courage dy'd.
But now reſolv'd and firm I'll be,
Since, Lord, 'tis mingled, and reach'd out by thee.

II.

I'll truſt my great Phyſician's skill,
I know what he preſcribes can ne'er be ill;
To each diſeaſe he knows what's fit,
I own him wiſe and good, and do ſubmit;

I'll

I'll now no longer grieve or pine,
Since 'tis thy pleaſure, Lord, it ſhall be mine.

III.

Thy med'cine puts me to great ſmart,
Thou'ſt wounded me in my moſt tender part;
But 'tis with a deſign to cure,
I muſt and will thy ſovereign touch endure.
All that I priz'd below is gone,
But yet I ſtill will pray, *thy will be done.*

IV.

Since 'tis thy ſentence I ſhould part
With the moſt precious treaſure of my heart,
I freely that and more reſign,
My heart it ſelf, as its delight, is thine;
My little all I give to thee,
Thou gav'ſt a greater giſt, thy Son, to me.

V.

He left true bliſs and joys above,
Himſelf he emptied of all good, but love:
For me he freely did forſake
More good, than he from me can ever take.
A mortal life for a divine
He took, and did at laſt even that reſign.

VI.

Take all, great God, I will not grieve,
But ſtill will wiſh that I had ſtill to give.
I hear thy voice, thou bid'ſt me quit
My paradiſe, I bleſs and do ſubmit.
I will not murmur at thy word,
Nor beg thy Angel to ſheath up his ſword.

To my GUARDIAN ANGEL.

I.

I Own (my gentle guide) that much I owe
For all thy tutelary care and love,
Through life's wild maze thou'ſt led me hitherto,
Nor ever wilt (I hope) thy tent remove;
But yet t' have been compleatly true,
Thou ſhould'ſt have guarded her life too.
Thou know'ſt my ſoul did moſt inhabit there,
I could have ſpared thee t' have guarded her.

II.

But ſince by thy neglect, or Heaven's decree,
She's gone t' encreaſe the pleaſures of the bleſt,
Since in this ſphere my Sun I ne'er ſhall ſee,
Grant me (kind ſpirit) grant me this requeſt:
When I ſhall eaſe thy charge and dye,
(For ſure I think thou wilt be by)
Lead me through all the numerous hoſt above,
And bring my new-flown ſoul to her I love.

III.

With what high paſſion ſhall we then embrace!
What pleaſure will ſhe take t' impart to me
The rites and methods of that ſacred place,
And what a Heaven 'twill be to learn from thee!
That pleaſure I ſhall then, I fear,
As ill as now my ſorrow bear;
And could then any chance my life deſtroy,
I ſhould, I fear, then dye again with joy.

The DEFIANCE.

I.

WEll, Fortune, now (if e'er) you've ſhewn
What you had in your power to do,
My wandring love at length had fix'd on one,
One who might pleaſe even unconſtant you.
Me of this one you have depriv'd
On whom I ſtay'd my ſoul, in whom I liv'd;
You've ſhewn your power, and I reſign,
But now I'll ſhew thee, Fortune, what's in mine.

II.

I will not, no, I will not grieve,
My tears within their banks ſhall ſtand;
Do what thou wilt, I am reſolv'd to live,
Since thee I can't, I will my ſelf command.
I will my paſſions ſo controul
That neither they nor thou ſhalt hurt my ſoul;
I'll run ſo counter to thy will,
Thy good I'll reliſh, but not feel thy ill.

III

I felt the ſhaft that laſt was ſent,
But now thy quiver I defy.
I fear no pain from thee or diſcontent,
Clad in the armour of philoſophy.
Thy laſt ſeiz'd on me out of guard,
Unarm'd too far within thy reach I dar'd;
But now the field I'll dearly ſell,
I'm now (at leaſt by thee) impaſſible.

IV.

My ſoul now ſoars high and ſublime,
Beyond the ſpring of thy beſt bow,
Like thoſe who ſo long on high mountains climb
Till they ſee rain and thunder here below.

In

In vain thou'lt ſpend thy darts on me,
My fort's too ſtrong for thy artillery;
Thy cloſeſt aim won't touch my mind,
Here's all thy gain, ſtill to be thought more blind.

SUPERSTITION.

I.

I Care not tho' it be
By the preciſer ſort thought popery;
We Poets can a licenſe ſhew
For every thing we do.
Hear then my little ſaint, I'll pray to thee

II.

If now thy happy mind
Amidſt its various joys can leaſure find
T' attend to any thing ſo low
As what I ſay or do,
Regard, and be what thou waſt ever, kind.

III.

Let not the bleſt above
Engroſs thee quite, but ſometimes hither rove;
Fain would I thy ſweet image ſee
And ſit and talk with thee,
Nor is it curioſity but love.

IV.

Ah what delight 'twou'd be, [me!
Would'ſt thou ſometimes by ſtealth converſe with
How ſhould I thy ſweet commerce prize
And other joys deſpiſe!
Come then, I ne'er was yet deny'd by thee.

V.

I would not long detain
Thy ſoul from bliſs, nor keep thee here in pain.
Nor ſhould thy fellow-ſaints e'er know
Of thy eſcape below,
Before thou'rt miſs'd, thou ſhould'ſt return again.

VI.

Sure Heaven muſt needs thy love
As well as other qualities improve.
Come then and recreate my ſight
With rays of thy pure light,
'Twill chear my eyes more than the lamps above.

VII.

But if fate's ſo ſevere,
As to confine thee to thy bliſsful ſphere,
(And by thy abſence I ſhall know
Whether thy ſtate be ſo)
Live happy, but be mindful of me there.

The Complaint of ADAM *turn'd out of* PARADISE.

I.

AND muſt I go, and muſt I be no more
The tenant of this happy ground?
Can no reſerves of pity me reſtore,
Can no atonement for my ſtay compound!
All the rich odours that here grow, I'd give
To Heaven in incenſe, might I here but live.
Or if it be a grace too high
To live in *Eden*, let me there but dye.

II. Fair

II.

Fair place, thy ſweets I juſt began to know,
And muſt I leave the now again?
Ah why does Heaven ſuch ſhort-liv'd bliſs beſtow?
A taſt of pleaſure, but full draught of pain.
I ask not to be chief in this bleſt ſtate,
Let Heaven ſome other for that place create.
So 'tis in *Eden* let me but have
And under-gardiner's place, 'tis all I crave.

III.

But 'twill not do, I ſee, I muſt away,
My feet prophane this ſacred ground;
Stay then, bright miniſter, one minute ſtay,
Let me in *Eden* take one farewel round.
Let me go gather but one fragrant bough
Which as a relique, I may keep and ſhew;
Fear not the tree of life; it were
A curſe to be immortal, and not here.

IV.

'Tis done; now farewel thou moſt happy place,
Farewel, ye ſtreams that ſoftly creep,
I ne'er again in you ſhall view my face.
Farewel, ye bowers, in you I ne'er ſhall ſleep.
Farewel, ye trees, ye flow'ry beds farewel,
You ne'er will bleſs my taſte, nor you my ſmell.
Farewel, thou Guardian divine,
To thee my happy rival I reſign.

V.

O whither now, whither ſhall I repair
Exil'd from this angelick coaſt?
There's nothing left that's pleaſant, good or fair,
The world can't recompence for *Eden* loſt.
'Tis true, I've here a univerſal ſway,
The creatures me as their chief Lord obey;
But yet the world, tho' all my ſeat,
Can't make me happy, tho' it make me great.

VI. Had

VI.

Had I loſt leſſer, and but ſeeming bliſs,
Reaſon my ſorrows might relieve,
But when the loſs great and ſubſtantial is,
To think is but to ſee good cauſe to grieve.
'Tis well I'm mortal, 'tis well I ſhortly muſt
Loſe all the thoughts of *Eden* in the duſt.
Senſeleſs and thoughtleſs now I'd be,
I'd loſe even my ſelf, ſince I've loſt thee.

To Sleep.

I.

BReak off thy ſlumber, gentle God,
And hither bring thy charming rod;
The rod that weeping eyes does cloſe
And gives to melancholy hearts repoſe;
With that my temples ſtroke, and let me be
Held by thy ſoft captivity.
But do not all my ſenſes bind,
Nor fetter up too cloſe my mind:
Let mimick fancy wake, and freely rove,
And bring th' idea of the Saint I love.

II.

Her lovely image has been brought
So often to my waking thought,
That 'tis at length worn out and dead,
And with its fair original is fled.
Or elſe my working over-thoughtful mind
With much intention is made blind;
Like thoſe who look on objects bright
So long, till they quite loſe their ſight.
Ah cruel fates! is't not enough for you
To take my Saint, but I muſt loſe her image too?

III. Thee,

III.

Thee, gentle charmer, I implore
This my loſt treaſure to reſtore;
Thy magick virtues all apply,
Set up again my bankrupt memory.
Search every cell and corner of my brain,
And bring my fugitive again.
To thy dark cave thy ſelf betake
And 'mong thy dreams enquiry make;
Summon the beſt ideas to appear
And bring that form which moſt reſembles her.

IV.

But if in all thy ſtore there be
None (as I fear) ſo fair as ſhe,
Then let thy painter's fancy limn
Her form anew, and ſend it by a dream.
Thou can'ſt him all her lively features tell,
For ſure I think thou knew'ſt her well.
But if deſcription won't ſuffice
For him to draw a piece ſo nice,
Then let him to my breaſt and heart repair,
For ſure her image is not worn out there.

The GRANT.

I.

'TWas when the tide of the returning day
Began to chaſe ill forms away,
When pious dreams the ſenſe employ,
And all within is innocence and joy,
My melancholy, thoughtful mind
O'ercome at length to ſleep reſign'd;
Not common ſleep, for I was bleſt
With ſomething more divine, more ſweet than reſt.

II. She

II.

She who her fine-wrought clay had lately left,
Of whoſe ſweet form I was bereft,
Was by kind fancy to me brought,
And made the object of my happy thought.
Clad ſhe was all in virgin white,
And ſhone with empyrean light;
A radiant glory crown'd her head,
She ſtream'd with light and love, and thus ſhe ſaid.

III.

And why this grief and paſſion for the bleſt?
Let all your ſorrows with me reſt.
My ſtate is bliſs, but I ſhould live,
Yet much more happy, would you ceaſe to grieve.
Dry up your tears (dear friend) and be
Happy in my felicity.
By this your wiſdom you'll approve,
Nay (what you'd moſt of all commend) your love.

IV.

She ſpake, diſſolv'd I lay and overcome,
And was with extaſie ſtruck dumb;
But ah the fierce tumultuous joy
Its own weak being, haſten'd to deſtroy.
To ſee that lovely form appear,
My ſpirits in ſuch commotion were,
Sleep could no more their force controul,
They ſhook their fetters off, and freed my unwil-

V. [ling ſoul.

What bliſs do we oft to deluſion owe?
Who would not ſtill be cheated ſo?
Opinion's an ingredient
That goes ſo far to make up true content,
That even a dream of happineſs
With real joy the ſoul does bleſs;
Let me but always dream of this,
And I will envy none their waking bliſs.

The ASPIRATION.

I.

HOW long, great God, how long muſt I
Immur'd in this dark priſon lye!
Where at the grates and avenues of ſenſe,
My ſoul muſt watch to have intelligence.
Where but faint gleams of thee ſalute my ſight,
Like doubtful moon-ſhine in a cloudy night.
When ſhall I leave this magick ſphere,
And be all mind, all eye, all ear!

II.

How cold this clime! and yet my ſenſe
Perceives even here thy influence.
Even here thy ſtrong magnetick charms I feel,
And pant and tremble like the amorous ſteel.
To lower good, and beauties leſs divine,
Sometimes my erroneous needle does decline;
But yet (ſo ſtrong the ſympathy)
It turns, and points again to thee.

III.

I long to ſee this excellence
Which at ſuch diſtance ſtrikes my ſenſe.
My impatient ſoul ſtruggles to diſengage
Her wings from the confinement of her cage.
Would'ſt thou, great love, this priſoner once ſet free,
How would ſhe haſten to be link'd to thee!
She'd for no Angels conduct ſtay,
But fly, and love on all the way.

The DEFENCE.

I.

THat I am colder in my friendſhip grown,
My faith and conſtancy you blame,
But ſure th' inconſtancy is all your own,
I am, but you are not the ſame.
The flame of love muſt needs expire,
If you ſubtract what ſhould maintain the fire.

II.

While to the laws of virtue you were true,
You had, and might retain my heart;
Now give me leave to turn apoſtate too,
Since you do from your ſelf depart.
Thus the reform'd are counted free
From ſchiſm, tho' they deſert the *Roman* ſee.

III.

The ſtricteſt union to be found below,
Is that which ſoul and body ties,
They all the myſteries of friendſhip know,
And with each other ſympathize.
And yet the ſoul will bid adieu
T' her much diſtemper'd mate, as I leave you.

The RETRACTATION.

I.

I'VE often charg'd all ſublunary bliſs,
With vanity and emptineſs:
Ye woods and ſtreams have heard me oft complain
How all things, how even your delights were vain.
Methought I could with one ſhort ſimple view,
Glance o'er all human joys, and ſee them through.

But now great preacher pardon me,
I cannot wholly to thy charge agree,
For muſick ſure and friendſhip have no vanity.

II.

No, each of theſe is a firm maſſy joy,
Which, tho' eternal, will not cloy.
Here may the venturous ſoul love on, and find,
Graſp what ſhe can, that more remains behind.
Such depths of joy theſe living ſprings contain,
As man t' eternity can never drain.
Theſe ſweets the truth of Heaven prove,
Only there's greater bliſs with Saints above,
Becauſe they've better muſick there, and firmer love.

The PROSPECT.

I.

WHat a ſtrange moment will that be,
My ſoul, how full of curioſity,
When wing'd, and ready for thy eternal flight,
On th' utmoſt edges of thy tottering clay,
Hovering and wiſhing longer ſtay,
Thou ſhalt advance, and have eternity in ſight!
When juſt about to try that unknown ſea,
What a ſtrange moment will that be!

II.

But yet how much more ſtrange that ſtate,
When looſen'd from th' embrace of this cloſe mate,
Thou ſhalt at once be plung'd in liberty,
And move as ſwift and active as a ray
Shot from the lucid ſpring of day?
Thou, who juſt now was clogg'd with dull mortality,
How wilt thou bear the mighty change, how know
Whether thou'rt then the ſame or no!

III. Then

III.

Then to ſtrange manſions of the air,
And ſtranger company muſt thou repair!
What a new ſcene of things will then appear!
This world thou by degrees waſt taught to know,
Which leſſen'd thy ſurpriſe below,
But knowledge all at once will overflow thee there.
That world, as the firſt man did this, thou'lt ſee,
Ripe grown, in full maturity.

IV.

There with bright ſplendours muſt thou dwell,
And be what only thoſe pure forms can tell.
There muſt thou live a while, gaze and admire,
Till the great Angel's trump this fabrick ſhake,
And all the ſlumbring dead awake,
Then to thy old ſorgotten ſtate muſt thou retire.
This union then will ſeem as ſtrange, or more
Than thy new liberty before.

V.

Now for the greateſt change prepare,
To ſee the only great, the only fair.
Vail now thy feeble eyes, gaze and be bleſt;
Here all thy turns and revolutions ceaſe,
Here's all ſerenity and peace:
Thou'rt to the center come, the native ſeat of reſt.
There's now no farther change nor need there be;
When one ſhall be variety.

The RETURN.

I.

DEar contemplation, my divineſt joy,
When I thy ſacred mount aſcend,
What heavenly ſweets my ſoul employ?
Why can't I there my days for ever ſpend?
When I have conquer'd thy ſteep heights with pain
What pity 'tis that I muſt down again!

II.

And yet I muſt; my paſſions would rebel,
Should I too long continue here:
No, here I muſt not think to dwell,
But mind the duties of my proper ſphere.
So Angels, tho' they Heaven's glories know,
Forget not to attend their charge below.

The 137*th* PSALM *Paraphraſed to the* 7*th Verſe.*

I.

BEneath a reverend gloomy ſhade,
Where *Tigris* and *Euphrates* cut their way,
With folded arms and head ſupinely laid
We ſate, and wept out all the tedious day;
Within its banks grief could not be
Contain'd, when, *Sion*, we remember'd thee.

II.

Our harps with which we oft' have ſung
In ſolemn ſtrains the great *Jehovah*'s praiſe,
Our warbling harps upon the trees we hung,
Too deep our grief to hear their pleaſing lays.

Our

Our harps were ſad, as well as we,
And tho' by Angels touch'd, would yield no harmony.

III.

But they who forc'd us from our ſeat,
The happy land, and ſweet abode of reſt,
Had one way left to be more cruel yet,
And ask'd a ſong from hearts with grief oppreſt.
Let's hear, ſay they, upon the lyre,
One of the anthems of your *Hebrew* quire.

IV.

How can we frame our voice to ſing
The hymns of joy, feſtivity and praiſe,
To thoſe who're aliens to our heavenly King,
And want a taſte for ſuch exalted lays?
Our harps will here refuſe to ſound;
An holy ſong is due to holy ground.

V.

No, deareſt *Sion*, if we can
So far forget thy melancholy ſtate
As now thou mourn'ſt, to ſing one chearful ſtrain,
This ill be added to our ebb of Fate;
Let neither harp nor voice e'er try
One hallelujah more, but ever ſilent lie.

The 139*th* PSALM *Paraphraſed to the* 14*th Verſe.*

I.

IN vain, great God, in vain I try
T' eſcape thy quick all-ſearching eye.
Thou with one undivided view
Doſt look the whole Creation through.

The unſhap'd Embryo's of my mind,
Not yet to form or likeneſs wrought,
The tender rudiments of thought
Thou ſeeſt, before ſhe can her own conception find.

II.

My private walks to thee are known,
In ſolitude I'm not alone;
Thou round my bed a guard doſt keep;
Thy eyes are open, while mine ſleep.
My ſofteſt whiſpers reach thy ear:
'Tis vain to fancy ſecrecy;
Which way ſoe'er I turn thou'rt there,
I am all round beſet with thy immenſity.

III.

I can't wade through this depth, I find;
It drowns and ſwallows up my mind.
'Tis like thy immenſe Deity,
I cannot fathom that, or thee.
Where then ſhall I a refuge find
From thy bright comprehenſive eye?
Whither, O whither ſhall I fly,
What place is not poſſeſt by thy all-filling mind?

IV.

If to the Heavenly orbs I fly,
There is thy ſeat of Majeſty.
If down to Hell's abyſs I go,
There I am ſure to meet thee too.
Should I with the ſwift wings of light
Seek ſome remote and unknown land,
Thou ſoon would'ſt overtake my flight,
And all my motions rule with thy long-reaching hand.

V.

Should I t' avoid thy piercing ſight,
Retire behind the skreen of night,
Thou can'ſt with one cœleſtial ray
Diſpel the ſhades and make it day.

Nor need'ſt thou by ſuch mediums ſee,
The force of thy clear radiant ſight,
Depends not on our groſſer light;
On light thou ſitt'ſt inthron'd, 'tis ever day with thee.

VI.

The ſprings which life and motion give
Are thine, by thee I move and live.
My frame has nothing hid from thee,
Thou know'ſt my whole anatomy.
T' an hymn of praiſe I'll tune my lyre;
How amazing is this work of thine?
With dread I into my ſelf retire,
For tho' the metal's baſe, the ſtamp is all divine.

To Dr. PLOT, *on his Natural Hiſtory of* Staffordſhire.

I.

WHAT ſtrange perverſity is this of man!
When 'twas a crime to taſte th' inlightning tree
He could not then his hand refrain,
None then ſo inquiſitive, ſo curious as he.
But now he has liberty to try and know
God's whole plantation below;
Now the angelick fruit may be
Taſted by all whoſe arms can reach the tree:
H' is now by licence careleſs made, [ſhade.
The tree neglects to climb, and ſleeps beneath the

II.

Such drowſy ſedentary ſouls have they
Who could to patriarchal years live on,
Fix'd to hereditary clay,

And

And know no climate but their own:
Contracted to their narrow ſphere,
Reſt before knowledge they prefer,
And of this globe wherein they dwell
No more than of the heavenly Orbs can tell;
As if by nature plac'd below,
Not on this earth to dwell, but to take root and grow.

III.

Dull ſouls, why did great Nature take ſuch care
To write in ſuch a ſplendid character;
If man, the only thing below
That can pretend her hand to know,
Her fair-writ volume does deſpiſe,
And tho' deſign'd for wiſdom won't be wiſe?
Th' Almighty gets no praiſe from this dull kind,
The Sun was never worſhip'd by the blind.
Such ignorance can ne'er devotion raiſe,
They will want wiſdom, and their Maker praiſe.

IV.

They only can this tribute duly yield
Whoſe active ſpirits range abroad,
Who traverſe o'er all Nature's field,
And view the great magnificence of God:
They ſee the hidden wealth of Nature's ſtore
Fall down, and learnedly adore;
But they moſt juſtly yet this tribute pay
Who don't contemplate only, but diſplay;
Comment on Nature's text, and to the ſenſe
Expoſe her latent excellence,
Who like the Sun, not only travel o'er
The world, but give it light that others may adore.

V.

In th' head of theſe heroick few
Our learned author here appears in view,
Whoſe ſearching genius like lamp of day
Does the earth's furniture diſplay,

Nor

Nor ſuffers to lie bury'd and unknown
Nature's rich talent or his own.
Drake and *Columbus* do in thee revive,
And we from thy reſearch as much receive:
Thou art as great as they, for 'tis all one
New worlds to find, or nicely to deſcribe the known.

VI.

On, mighty Hero, our whole iſle ſurvey,
Advance thy ſtandard, conquer all the way.
Let nothing but the ſea controul
The progreſs of thy active ſoul.
Act like a pious courteous ghoſt,
And to mankind retrieve what's loſt;
With thy victorious charitable hand
Point out the hidden treaſures of our land.
Envy or ignorance do what they will,
Thou haſt a bleſſing from the Muſes hill.
Great be thy ſpirit as thy work's divine, [thine.
Shew thou thy Maker's praiſe, we Poets will ſing

The EXCHANGE.

I.

WHEN *Corydon* had loſt his liberty,
And felt the tyrant's heavy chain;
He ſwore, could he but once get free,
He'd never, no, he'd never love again.

II.

But ſtay, dull ſhepherd, if you quench your fire,
Too dear you'll buy your liberty:
Let not ſuch vigorous heats expire,
I'll teach thee how to love, and yet be free.

III. Take

III.

Take bright *Urania* to thy amorous breaſt,
To her thy flaming heart reſign;
Void not the room, but change the gueſt,
And let thy ſenſual love commence divine.

IV.

The ſwain obey'd, and when he once had known
This foretaſte of the joys above,
He vow'd, tho' he might be his own,
Yet he would ever, yes, he'd ever love.

The REFINEMENT.

I.

WELL, 'twas a hard decree of Fate,
My ſoul, to clip thy pinions ſo,
To make thee leave thy pure æthereal ſtate,
And breathe the vapours of this ſphere below;
Where he that can pretend to have
Moſt freedom, 's ſtill his body's ſlave.

II.

Was e'er a ſubſtance ſo divine
With ſuch an unlike conſort joyn'd?
Did ever things ſo wide, ſo cloſe combine
As maſſy clods and ſun-beams, earth and mind?
When yet two ſouls can ne'er agree
In friendſhip, but by parity.

III.

Unequal match! what wilt thou do,
My ſoul, to raiſe thy plumes again?
How wilt thou this groſs vehicle ſubdue,
And thy firſt bliſs, firſt purity obtain?
Thy conſort how wilt thou refine,
And be again all o'er divine?

IV. Fix,

IV.

Fix on the ſovereign Fair thy eye,
And kindle in thy breaſt a flame;
Wind up thy paſſions to a pitch ſo high,
Till they melt down, and rarify thy frame.
Like the great Prophet then aſpire,
Thy chariot will, like his, be fire.

To Melancholy.

I.

MYſterious paſſion, deareſt pain,
Tell me, what wondrous charms are [theſe
With which thou doſt torment and pleaſe,
I grieve to be thy ſlave, yet would not freedom gain.
No tyranny like thine we know,
That half ſo cruel e'er appear'd,
And yet thou'rt lov'd as well as fear'd,
Perhaps the only tyrant that is ſo.

II.

Long have I been thy votary,
Thou'ſt led me out to woods and groves,
Mad'ſt me deſpiſe all other loves,
And give up all my paſſions, all my ſoul to thee.
Thee for my firſt companion did I chuſe,
Firſt, even before my darling Muſe;
And yet I know of thee no more
Than thoſe who never did thy ſhrine adore.

III.

Thou'rt Myſtery and Riddle all,
Like thoſe thou inſpireſt, thou lov'ſt to be
In darkneſs and obſcurity. [call.
Even learned *Athens* thee an unknown God might

Strange

Strange contraries in thee combine,
Both Hell and Heaven in thee meet,
Thou greateſt Bitter, greateſt Sweet.
No pain is like thy pain, no pleaſure too like thine.

IV.

'Tis the grave doctrine of the ſchools,
That contraries can never be
Conſiſtent in the high'ſt degree,
But thou muſt ſtand exempt from their dull narrow rules.
And yet 'tis ſaid, the brighteſt mind
Is that which is by thee refin'd.
See here a greater myſtery,
Thou mak'ſt us wiſe, yet ruin'ſt our philoſophy.

The DISCONTENT.

I.

NOT that it is not made my fate
To ſtand upon the dangerous heights of ſtate.
Nor that I cannot be poſſeſt
Of th' hidden treaſures of the *Eaſt*,
Nor that I cannot bathe in pleaſures ſpring,
And rifle all the ſweets which Nature's gardens bring,
Do I repine, my deſtiny,
I can all theſe deſpiſe as well as you deny.

II.

It ſhall not diſcompoſe my mind
Though not one Star above to me prove kind.
Their influence may ſway the ſea,
But make not the leaſt change in me.
They neither can afflict my ſtate, nor bleſs;
Their greateſt gifts are ſmall, and my deſires are leſs.
My veſſel bears but little ſail,
What need I then a full and ſwelling gale?

III. And

III.

And yet I'm diſcontented too,
Perhaps, y'aſpiring ſouls, as much as you;
We both in equal trouble live,
But for much different cauſes grieve;
You, that theſe gilded joys you can't obtain;
And I, becauſe I know they're empty all and vain.
You ſtill purſue in hopes to find,
I ſtand and dare not flatter on my mind.

IV.

This Tree of Knowledge is, I ſee,
Still fatal to poor man's felicity.
That which yields others great repaſt,
Can't pleaſe my now enlighten'd taſte.
Before, tho' I could nothing ſolid find,
Yet ſtill with ſpecious proſpects I could pleaſe my mind.
Now all the fartheſt I can ſee
Is one perpetual round of vanity.

BEAUTY.

I.

BEST object of the paſſion moſt divine,
What excellence can Nature ſhew
In all her various ſtore below,
Whoſe charms may be compar'd to thine?
Even light it ſelf is therefore fair
Only becauſe it makes thy ſweets appear.

II.

Thou ſtreaming ſplendor of the Face divine,
What in the regions above,
Do Saints, like thee, adore or love,
What excellence is there like thine?

I except not the Divinity ;
That great and ſovereign good, for thou art He.

III.

He's Beauty's vaſt abyſs and boundleſs ſea,
The primitive and greateſt Fair,
All his perfections Beauties are,
Beauty is all the Deity.
Some ſtreams from this vaſt ocean flow,
And that is all that pleaſes, all that's fair below.

IV.

Divine Perfection, who alone art all
That various ſcene of excellence
Which pleaſes either mind or ſenſe,
Tho' thee by different names we call!
Search Nature through, thou ſtill wilt be
The ſum of all that's good in her variety.

V.

Love, that moſt active paſſion of the mind,
Whoſe roving flame does traverſe o'er
All Nature's good, and reach for more,
Still to thy magick ſphere's confin'd.
'Tis Beauty all we can deſire,
Beauty's the native manſion of Love's fire.

VI.

Thoſe finer ſpirits who from the croud retire
To ſtudy Nature's artful ſcheme,
Or ſpeculate a theorem,
What is't but Beauty they admire ?
And they too who enamour'd are
Of virtue's face, love her becauſe ſhe's fair.

VII.

No Empire, ſovereign Beauty, is like thine,
Thou reign'ſt unrivall'd and alone,
And univerſal is thy throne,
Stoicks themſelves to thee reſign.

From

From paſſions be they ne'er ſo free,
Something they needs muſt love, and that is thee.

VIII.

He whom we all adore; that mighty He,
Owns thy ſupreme dominion,
And happy lives in thee alone,
We 're bleſt in him, and he in thee:
In thee he's infinitely bleſt,
Thou art the inmoſt center of his reſt.

IX.

Pleas'd with thy form which in his eſſence ſhin'd,
Th' Almighty choſe to multiply
This flower of his Divinity
And leſſer beauties ſoon deſign'd.
The unform'd Chaos he remov'd,
Tinctur'd the maſs with thee, and then it lov'd.

X.

But do not thou, my ſoul, fixt here remain,
All ſtreams of Beauty here below
Do from that immenſe ocean flow,
And thither they ſhould lead again.
Trace than theſe ſtreams, till thou ſhalt be
At length o'erwhelm'd in Beauty's boundleſs ſea.

LOVE.

I.

IMperial paſſion! ſacred fire!
When we of meaner ſubjects ſing,
Thou tun'ſt our harps, thou doſt our ſouls inſpire,
'Tis Love directs the quill, 'tis Love ſtrikes every ſtring,
But where's another Deity
T' inſpire the man that ſings of thee?

II.

W'are by miſtaken Chymiſts told,
That the moſt active part of all
The various compound caſt in Nature's mould,
Is that which they mercurial ſpirit call.
But ſure 'tis Love they ſhould have ſaid,
Without this even their ſpirit is dead.

III.

Love's the great ſpring of Nature's wheel,
Love does the maſs pervade and move,
What 'ſcapes the Sun's, does thy warm influence feel,
The Univerſe is kept in tune by Love.
Thou Nature giv'ſt her ſympathy,
The center has its charm from thee.

IV.

Love did great nothing's barren womb
Impregnate with his genial fire;
From this firſt parent did all creatures come,
Th' Almighty will'd, and made all by deſire.
Nay more, among the ſacred Three,
The third ſubſiſtence is from thee.

V.

The happieſt order of the bleſt
Are thoſe whoſe tide of Love's moſt high,
The bright ſeraphick hoſt; who're more poſſeſt
Of good, becauſe more like the Deity.
T' him they advance as they improve
Their noble heat, for God is Love.

VI.

Shall then a paſſion ſo divine
Stoop down and mortal beauties know?
Nature's great ſtatute law did ne'er deſign
That Heavenly fire ſhould kindle here below;
Let it aſcend and dwell above,
The proper element of Love.

The CONSUMMATION: *A Pindarick Ode.*

I.

THE riſe of Monarchies, and their long weighty fall,
My Muſe outſoars; ſhe proudly leaves behind
The pomps of court, ſhe leaves her little all,
To be the humble ſong of a leſs reaching mind.
In vain I curb her tow'ring flight;
All I can here preſent's too ſmall.
She preſſes on, and now has loſt their ſight,
She flies, and haſtens to relate
The laſt and dreadful ſcene of fate,
Nature's great ſolemn funeral.
I ſee the mighty Angel ſtand
Cloath'd with a cloud, and rainbow round his head,
His right foot on the ſea, his other on the land.
He lifted up his dreadful arm, and thus he ſaid.
By the myſterious great Three-one,
Whoſe power we fear, and truth adore,
I ſwear the fatal thread is ſpun,
Nature ſhall breathe her laſt, and time ſhall be no more.
The antient ſtager of the day,
Has run his minutes out, and numbred all his way.
The parting *Iſthmus* is thrown down,
And all ſhall now be over-flown.
Time ſhall no more her under-current know,
But one with great eternity ſhall grow:
Their ſtreams ſhall mix, and in one circling channel flow.

II.

He ſpake, fate writ the ſentence with her iron pen,
And mighty thundrings ſaid, *Amen.*
What dreadful ſound's this ſtrikes my ear?
'Tis ſure th' Archangels trump I hear,

Nature's great paſſing-bell, the only call
Of God's, that will be heard by all.
The univerſe takes the alarm, the ſea
Trembles at the great Angels ſound,
And roars almoſt as loud as he, [ground.
Seeks a new channel, and would fain run under-
The earth it ſelf does no leſs quake,
And all throughout, down to the center ſhake,
The graves uncloſe, and the deep ſleepers there
The Sun's arreſted in his way, [awake.
He dares not forward go,
But wondring ſtands at the great hurry here below,
The Stars forget their laws, and like looſe planets
See how the elements reſign [ſtray.
Their numerous charge, their ſcatter'd atoms home repair,
Some from the earth, ſome from the ſea, ſome from the air:
They know the great alarm,
And in confus'd mixt numbers ſwarm,
Till rang'd and ſever'd by the chymiſtry divine.
The Father of mankind's amaz'd to ſee
The globe too narrow for his progeny.
But 'tis the cloſing of the age,
And all the actors now at once muſt grace the ſtage.

III.

Now, Muſe, exalt thy wing, be bold and dare,
Fate does a wondrous ſcene prepare;
The central fire, which hitherto did burn
Dull, like a lamp in a moiſt clammy urn;
Fann'd by the breath divine, begins to glow,
The fiends are all amaz'd below.
But that will no confinement know,
Breaks through its ſacred fence, and plays more free,
Than thou, with all thy vaſt Pindarick liberty.
Nature does ſick of a ſtrong fever lye:

The

The fire the ſubterraneous vaults does ſpoil;
The mountains ſweat, the ſun does boil;
The ſea, her mighty pulſe, beats high:
The waves of fire more proudly rowl;
The fiends in their deep caverns howl,
And with the frightful trumpet mix their hideous [cry.
Now is the tragick ſcene begun; [Sun.
The fire in triumph marches on;
The earth's girt round with flames and ſeems another

IV.

But whither does this lawleſs judgment roam?
Muſt all promiſcuouſly expire
A ſacrifice in *Sodom*'s fire?
Read thy commiſſion, Fate; ſure all are not thy due,
No, thou muſt ſave the virtuous few.
But where's the Angel guardian to avert the doom?
Lo, with a mighty hoſt he's come:
I ſee the parted clouds give way;
I ſee the banner of the Croſs diſplay.
Death's Conqueror in pomp appears,
In his right hand a palm he bears,
And in his looks redemption wears:
Th'illuſtrious glory of this ſcene,
Does the deſpairing Saints inſpire
With joy, with rapture and deſire;
Kindles the higher life that dormant la[y within.
Th' awaken'd virtue does its ſtrength diſplay,
Melts and refines their droſſy clay;
New caſt into a pure ætherial fra[me,
They fly and mount a loft in ve[hicles of flame.
Slack here, my Muſe, th[y roving wing,
And now the world's untun'd, let down thy high
ſet ſtring.

FREEDOM.

I.

I Do not ask thee, Fate, to give
This little ſpan a long reprieve.
Thy pleaſures here are all ſo poor and vain,
I care not hence how ſoon I'm gone.
Date as thou wilt my time, I ſhan't complain;
May I but ſtill live free, and call it all my own.

II.

Let my ſand ſlide away apace;
I care not, ſo I hold the glaſs.
Let me my time, my books, my ſelf enjoy;
Give me from cares a ſure retreat;
Let no impertinence my hours employ,
That's in one word, kind Heaven, let me ne'er be great.

III.

In vain, from chains and fetters free,
The great man boaſts of liberty.
He's pinion'd up by former rules of ſtate,
Can ne'er from noiſe and duſt retire;
He's hunted ſtill by crouds that round him wait,
His lot's to be in pain, as that of fools t'admire.

IV.

Mean while the ſwain has calm repoſe,
Freely he comes, and freely goes.
Thus the bright ſtars, whoſe ſtation is more high,
Are fix'd, and by ſtrict meaſures move,
While lower planets wanton in the Sky,
Are bound to no ſet laws, but humourſomly rove.

To his Muse.

I.

COme, Muſe, let's caſt up our accounts, and ſee
How much you are in debt to me:
You've reign'd thus long the miſtreſs of my heart,
You've been the ruling planet of my days,
In my ſpare hours you've had your part,
Ev'n now my ſervile hand your ſovereign will obeys.
Too great ſuch ſervice to be free,
Tell me what I'm to have for being thy votary.

II.

You have preferments in your gift, you ſay,
You can with gold my ſervice pay;
I fear thy boaſt, your ſacred hill I'm told,
In a poor, curs'd and barren country lies;
Beſides, what's ſtate to me, or gold,
Theſe, you long ſince have taught me to deſpiſe.
To put me off with this, would be
Not to reward, but tax my ill proficiency.

III.

But fame, you ſay, will make amends for all;
This you your ſovereign bleſſing call,
The only laſting good, that never dies.
A good, which never can be bought too dear,
Which all the wiſe and virtuous prize,
The Gods too with delight their praiſes hear.
This ſhall my portion be, you ſay,
You'll crown my head with an immortal bay.

IV.

Give me a place leſs high, and more ſecure,
This dangerous good I can't endure.
The peaceful banks which profound ſilence keep,
The little boat ſecurely paſſes by,
But where with noiſe the waters creep,
Turn off with care, for treacherous rocks are nigh.
Then Muſe farewel, I ſee your ſtore
Can't pay for what is paſt, and I can truſt no more.



OF

OF THE

Advantages of THINKING.

MAN being the only creature here below deſign'd for a ſociable life, has two faculties to diſtinguiſh him from other creatures, thinking and ſpeaking. The one, to fit him for the ſociety of others; and the other to qualifie him alſo for his own. As to the latter of theſe faculties, there's no fear of its gathering ruſt for want of uſe. We are rather apt to ſpeak too much; and the moſt reſerv'd have reaſon to pray with the Pſalmiſt, *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

But the former, is that which generally lies fallow and neglected; as may be gueſs'd from the intemperate uſe of the other. There are few indeed, that are capable of thinking to any great purpoſe: But among thoſe that are, there are fewer that employ this excellent talent. And for ought I know, however ſtrange it may ſeem, among the ingenious and well educated, there are as few thinkers as among the herd of the vulgar and illiterate. For either they live a popular life; and then what for buſineſs, pleaſure, company, viſits, with a world of other impertinencies, there's ſcarce

ſcarce room for ſo much as a morning reflection. Or elſe, they live retir'd, and then either they doze away their time in drowſineſs and brown ſtudies; or, if brisk and active, they lay themſelves out wholly upon devouring books, and making common places; and ſcarce entertain their ſolitude with a meditation, once in a moon.

But it is meerly for want of thinking that they can allow themſelves in doing ſo. For by a little of this they would ſoon diſcover, that of all the methods of improvement that can be uſed, there is none ſo advantageous as thinking; either for our intellectuals or our morals; to make us wiſer, or to make us better. And firſt, for our intellectuals. 'Tis the perfection of our rational part to know; that is, to be able to frame clear and diſtinct conceptions, to form right judgments, and to draw true conſequences from one thing to another. Now beſides, that the powers of the mind are made more bright, vigorous, and active by uſe, as all other faculties are; there is this farther advantage, that by habitual thinking the object is made more familiar to the underſtanding; the habitudes and relations of ideas one towards another, by frequent comparing, become more viſible and apparent; and conſequently it will be more eaſie to perceive them, and ſo to divide what ought to be divided, and to compound what ought to be compounded, wherein conſiſts the ſum of what belongs to contemplation and ſcience.

Reading is indeed very excellent and uſeful to this purpoſe; but thinking is neceſſary. This may do without the other, as appears in the firſt inventers of arts and ſciences, who were fain to think out their way to the receſſes of truth; but the other can never do, without this. Reading without thinking,

thinking, may indeed make a rich common place, but 'twill never make a clear head; it may indeed bring in a great ſtore of Hyle, but 'tis yet without form, and void, till thinking, like the ſeminal ſpirit, agitates the dead ſhapeleſs lump, and works it up into figure and ſymmetry.

But of what advantage thinking is to the advancement of knowledge, will farther appear, by conſidering ſome of the chief impediments of it; and how they are removed by thinking. And the firſt that I ſhall mention, is the prejudice of infancy. We form infinite raſh judgments of things, before we duly underſtand any thing; and theſe grow up with us, take root, ſpread and multiply; till after long uſe and cuſtom, we miſtake them for common notions and dictates of nature; and then we think it a crime to go about to unlearn or eradicate them. And as long as we ſtand thus affected, we are condemn'd to errors and perpetual wandrings. So great reaſon had the excellent *Des-Cartes* to lay the foundation of his philoſophy in an equipoiſe of mind; and to make the removal of theſe prejudices the very entrance and beginning of wiſdom.

But now when a man ſets upon a courſe of thinking, nothing will be ſo obvious as to conſider, that ſince we come ſo late to the perfect uſe of our reaſon; among thoſe many judgments we have made, 'tis very likely the major part are falſe and erroneous. And this is a fair ſtep to the ſhaking off thoſe infant-prejudices; at leaſt he will be thereby induc'd not to believe any thing, for this reaſon, becauſe he had given it ſuch early entertainment. From this general reflection he proceeds to examine the things themſelves. And now he is a capable judge, can hear both ſides with an indifferent ear,

is

is determin'd only by the moments of truth; and ſo retracts his paſt errors, and has the beſt moral ſecurity againſt any for the future.

Another great hindrance to knowledge is the wrong perception of things. When the ſimple Ideas of our minds are confus'd, our judgments can never proceed without error. 'Tis like a fault in the firſt concoction, which is never corrected in either of the other. For how can I judge whether the attribute agree to the ſubject, if my notion of both be confus'd and obſcure; But now, the only cauſe of the confuſedneſs of our notions, next to the natural inability of our faculties, is want of attention and cloſe application of mind. We don't dwell enough upon the object; but ſpeculate it tranſiently, and in haſte; and then, no wonder that we conceive it by halves. Thinking therefore is a proper remedy for this defect alſo.

Another great hindrance to knowledge is ambiguity of terms and phraſes. This has bred a world of confuſion and miſunderſtanding; eſpecially in controverſies of religion; a great many of which, if thoroughly ſifted and well compared, will be found to be meer verbal contentions; as may appear from what the excellent Monſieur *Le Blanc* has perform'd in this kind. But now, this is owing meerly to want of thinking. There is a latitude in the phraſe; and one writer not ſufficiently attending to that determinate ſenſe of it which his adverſary intends, very haſtily and furiouſly denies what the other does not affirm; and he again as furiouſly affirms what this does not deny. So that they are really agreed all along, and yet fight on like fools in the dark. And there is no hopes they will ever be reconciled, till either they will take

take the pains to think themſelves, or ſome body elſe will be ſo kind, as to think for 'em.

Another great hindrance to knowledge, is an over-fond and ſuperſtitious deference to authority, eſpecially that of antiquity. There is nothing that cramps the parts, and fetters the underſtandings of men like this ſtrait lac'd humour. Men are reſolv'd never to out ſhoot their fore-fathers mark; but write one after another, and ſo the dance goes round in a circle; out of which, if ſome had not the boldneſs and courage to venture, the world would never be the wiſer for being older. The ſchoolmen are a great inſtance of this, men of ſingular abilities, and ſharp underſtandings, capable of the higheſt improvements, and of penetrating into the deepeſt receſſes of truth, had they but the power of making a free uſe of their thoughts. But ſo bound up to authorities, and ſo devoted to the principles of a philoſophy, whoſe foundation is laid in the falſe and confuſed ideas of ſenſe, that their advancements in theory and ſcience, were not anſwerable to the capacity which they were endued with, the leiſure which they enjoyed, and the indefatigable diligence which they uſed. And all becauſe of the great diſadvantage they laboured under, it being confined within the circle of authority, to which, even in this freer age, ſome have ſtill ſo ſervile a regard, that they would rather loſe truth, than go out of the road to find it. This alſo makes men otherwiſe ſenſeful and ingenious, quote ſuch things many times out of an old dull author, and with a peculiar emphaſis of commendation too, as would never paſs even in ordinary converſation; and which they themſelves would never have took notice of, had not ſuch an author ſaid it. But now, no ſooner does

does a man give himſelf leave to think, but he perceives how abſurd and unreaſonable 'tis, that one man ſhould preſcribe to all poſterity: That men, like beaſts, ſhould follow the foremoſt of the herd; and that venerable nonſenſe ſhould be preferr'd before new-ſenſe: He conſiders, that that which we call antiquity, is properly the nonage of the world; that the ſageſt of his authorities were once new; and that there is no other difference between an antient author and himſelf, but 'tis only that of time; which, if of any advantage, 'tis rather on his ſide, as living in a more refined and mature age of the world. And thus having caſt off this intellectual ſlavery, like one of the brave Ἐκλεκτικοὶ mention'd by *Laertius*, he addicts himſelf to no author, ſect or party; but freely picks up truth wherever he can find it; puts to ſea upon his own bottom; holds the ſtern himſelf; and now, if ever, we may expect new diſcoveries.

There are other notable impediments to the improvement of knowledge, ſuch as paſſion, intereſt, fear of being tax'd with inconſtancy, ſcorn of being inform'd by another, envy, the humour of contradiction, and ſometimes flattery in applauding every thing we hear, and the like. Now as to the manner how all theſe are remov'd by thinking, it may ſuffice to ſay in general, that they are all obviouſly abſurd and ridiculous; and however unthinking men may be abuſed by them, yet a free and cloſe thinker muſt needs quickly perceive that they are ſo: And there is no better moral way that I know of to be quit of ill habits, than the being convinc'd of their folly and miſchief.

But the greateſt advantage of thinking is yet behind, that it improves our morals as well as our intellectuals;

intellectuals; and ſerves to make us better, as well as wiſer. This is in a great meaſure included in the other. All therefore that I ſhall farther remark concerning it is this, that conſidering the great influence the underſtanding has upon the will, there are but two things that are humanly neceſſary (for I exclude not the Grace of God, tho' I have no occaſion here to conſider it) to regulate our behaviour, and to preſerve us in our duty. Firſt, an habitual theory of what we ought and ought not to do; and of all the motives and engagements to the one and to the other. Secondly, an actual and clear preſence of all this to the mind, in every inſtant of action. And this is for the moſt part the thinking man's condition. He does not only habitually know, but actually attends both to his duty, and to all the engagements for its performance. He has thoſe conſiderations almoſt always preſent with him, which to others are the principles of repentance; and this keeps him in his duty, which brings others to it; and makes him live like thoſe righteous perſons, of whom our Saviour ſays, that they *need no repentance.*

Of the Care and Improvement of TIME.

TO be careful how we manage and employ our time, is one of the firſt precepts that is taught in the ſchool of wiſdom, and one of the laſt that is learn'd. The firſt and leading dictate of prudence is, that a man propoſe to himſelf his true and beſt intereſt for his end; and the next is, that

that he make uſe of all thoſe means and opportunities whereby that end is to be attain'd. And betwixt theſe two there is ſuch a cloſe connexion, that he who does not do the latter, cannot be ſuppoſed to intend the former. He that is not careful of his actions, ſhall never perſuade me that he ſeriouſly propoſes to himſelf his beſt intereſt, as his end; for if he did, he would as ſeriouſly apply himſelf to the regulation of the other, as the means. And ſo he that is not careful of his time, cannot in reaſon be ſuppoſed to be careful of his actions, for if he were, he would certainly have a ſpecial regard to the opportunity of their performance.

But, as I obſerv'd in the beginning, though this precept be one of the elementary dictates of prudence, and ſtands written in the firſt page of the firſt book of *Wiſdom*; yet ſuch is the ſottiſhneſs and ſtupidity of the world, that there is none that is more ſlowly learn'd. And 'tis a prodigious thing to conſider, that although among all the talents which are committed to our ſtewardſhip, time upon ſeveral accounts is the moſt precious, yet there is not any one, of which the generality of men are more profuſe and regardleſs. Tho' it be a thing of that ineſtimable value, that 'tis not diſtributed to us entirely and at once, like other bleſſings, but is dealt out in minutes and little parcels, as if man were not fit to be truſted with the entire poſſeſſion of ſuch a choice treaſure, yet there are very many that think themſelves ſo overſtock'd with it, that inſtead of husbanding it to advantage, the main buſineſs of their thoughts is how to rid their hands of it, and accordingly they catch at every ſhadow and opportunity of relief; ſtrike in at a venture with the next companion; and ſo the

the dead commodity be taken off, care not who be the chapman. Nay, 'tis obvious to obſerve, that even thoſe perſons who are frugal and thrifty in every thing elſe, are yet extremely prodigal of their beſt revenue, Time; of which alone (as *Seneca* neatly obſerves) 'tis a virtue to be covetous.

Neither may this cenſure be faſtned only upon the unthinking multitude, the ſphere of whoſe conſideration is ſuppoſed to be very narrow, and their apprehenſion ſhort-ſighted; but I obſerve that many of thoſe who ſet up for wits, and pretend to a more than ordinary ſagacity and delicacy of ſenſe, do notwithſtanding ſpend their time very unaccountably, and live away whole days, weeks, and ſometimes months together, to as little purpoſe (tho' it may be not ſo innocently) as if they had been aſleep all the while. And this they are ſo far from being aſham'd to own, that they freely boaſt of it, and pride themſelves in it, thinking that it tends to their reputation, and commends the greatneſs of their parts, that they can ſupport themſelves upon the natural ſtock, without being beholden to the intereſt that is brought in by ſtudy and induſtry.

But if their parts be ſo good as they would have others believe, ſure they are worth improving; if not, they have the more need of it. And tho' it be an argument of a rich mind, to be able to maintain it ſelf without labour, and ſubſiſt without the advantages of ſtudy, yet there is no man that has ſuch a portion of ſenſe, but will underſtand the uſe of his time better than to put it to the tryal. Greatneſs of parts is ſo far from being a diſcharge from induſtry, that I find men of the moſt exquiſite ſenſe in all ages were always moſt curious of their time: Nay, the moſt intelligent of all

created beings (who may be allow'd to paſs a truer eſtimate upon things than the fineſt mortal wit) value time at a high rate. *Let me go* (ſaith the Angel to the importunate Patriarch) *for the' day breaketh.* And therefore I very much ſuſpect the excellency of thoſe mens parts, who are diſſolute and careleſs miſpenders of their time: For if they were men of any thoughts, how is it poſſible but theſe ſhould be ſome in the number? (*viz.*) "That "this life is wholly in order to another, and that "time is that ſole opportunity that God has given "us for tranſacting the great buſineſs of eternity: "That our work is great, and our day of working "ſhort, much of which alſo is loſt and render'd "uſeleſs, through the cloudineſs and darkneſs of "the morning, and the thick vapour and unwhol-"ſome fogs of the evening; the ignorance and in-"advertency of youth, and the diſeaſes and infir-"mities of old age: That our portion of time is not "only ſhort, as to its duration, but alſo uncertain "in the poſſeſſion: That the loſs of it is irrepara-"ble to the loſer, and profitable to no body elſe: "That it ſhall be ſeverely accounted for at the "great judgment, and lamented in a ſad eter-"nity.

He that conſiders theſe things (and ſure he muſt needs be a very unthinking man that does not) will certainly be choice of his time, and look upon it no longer as a bare ſtate of duration, but as an opportunity; and conſequently will let no part of it (no conſiderable part at leaſt) ſlip away either unobſerv'd or unimprov'd. This is the moſt effectual way that I know of to ſecure to ones ſelf the character of a wiſe man here, and the reward of one hereafter. Whereas the vain enthuſiaſtick pretenders to the gift of wit, that trifle away their time,

time, betray the ſhallowneſs and poverty of their ſenſe to the diſcerning few; or whatever they may paſs for here among their fellow mortals, do moſt infallibly make themſelves cheap in the ſight of Angels.

Of SOLITUDE.

IT may perhaps be urged as an objection againſt the infinite happineſs and ſelf-ſufficiency of God, that if there were ſuch a perfect and ſelf-ſufficient Being, who was completely happy in the enjoyment of himſelf, he would never have gone about to make a world. Now tho' there be indeed no force in this atheiſtical objection, (the deſign of God in creating the world being not to increaſe his happineſs, but to communicate it,) yet it proceeds upon this true ſuppoſition, that ſociety is a bleſſing. It is ſo, and that not only reſpectively, and in reference to the preſent circumſtances of the world, and the neceſſities of this life, but alſo ſimply, and in its own nature; ſince it ſhall be an acceſſory to our bliſs in Heaven, and add many moments to the weight of glory. Neither will the truth of this aſſertion be at all weaken'd by alledging, that no benefit or advantage accrues to God by it; for that it becomes unbeneficial to him (though a bleſſing in its own nature) is purely by accident, becauſe God eminently containing in himſelf all poſſible good, is uncapable of any new acceſſion.

And as ſociety is in its own Nature an inſtrument of happineſs, ſo is it made much more ſo by the indigencies and infirmities of men. Man of

all creatures in the world, is leaſt qualify'd to live alone, becauſe there is no creature that has ſo many neceſſities to be reliev'd. And this I take to be one of the great arts of providence, to ſecure mutual amity, and the reciprocation of good turns in the world, it being the nature of indigency, like common danger, to indear men to one another, and make them herd together like fellow-ſailors in a ſtorm. And this indeed is the true caſe of mankind; we all ſail in one bottom, and in a rough ſea, and ſtand in need of one another's help at every turn, both for the neceſſities and refreſhments of life. And therefore I am very far from commending the undertaking of thoſe *Aſceticks*, that out of a pretence of keeping themſelves unſpotted from the world, take up their quarters in deſarts, and utterly abandon all human ſociety: This is in ſhort (to ſay no more of it) to put themſelves into an incapacity, either of doing any good to the world, or of receiving any from it; and certainly that can be no deſirable ſtate. No, this eremetical way of living is utterly inconſiſtent with the circumſtances and inclinations of human nature; he muſt be a God, ſelf-ſufficient and independent, that is fit for this ſtate of abſolute and perfect ſolitude, and in this rigorous ſenſe, *it is not good for man* (tho' in Paradiſe it ſelf) *to be alone.*

But though ſociety, as 'tis oppoſed to a ſtate of perfect and perpetual ſolitude, be a bleſſing, yet conſidering how little of it there is in the world that is good, I think it adviſable for every man that has ſenſe and thoughts enough, to be his own companion, (for certainly there is more requir'd to qualify a man for his own company than for other mens,) to be as frequent in his retirements

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as he can, and to communicate as little with the world as is conſiſtent with the duty of doing good, and the diſcharge of the common offices of humanity. 'Tis true indeed (as *Seneca* ſays,) *Miſcendæ & alternandæ ſunt ſolitudo & frequentia:* Solitude and company are to have their turns, and to be interplaced. But wiſe men us'd to dedicate the largeſt ſhare of their lives to the former, and let the beſt and moſt of their time go to make up the canonical hours of ſtudy, meditation and devotion. And for this, beſides the practice of wiſe men, we have the authentick example of our bleſſed Lord himſelf, who, as 'tis reaſonably ſuppoſed, (for he had paſſed the thirtieth year of his life before he enter'd upon the ſtage of action, and then alſo ſought all opportunities to be alone, and oftentimes purchas'd retirement at the expence of night-watches,) allotted the greateſt part of his little time here on earth, to privacy and retirement; and 'tis highly probable, would have liv'd much more reſervedly, had not the peculiar buſineſs of his function made it neceſſary for him to be converſant in the world. The inclination of our Lord lay more toward the contemplative way of life, tho' the intereſt of mankind engaged him oftentimes upon the active. And 'tis very obſervable, that there is ſcarce any one thing which he vouchſafed to grace with ſo many marks and inſtances of favour and reſpect, as he did ſolitude. Which are thus ſumm'd up by the excellent pen of a very great maſter of learning and language:

" It was ſolitude and retirement in
" which Jeſus kept his vigils; the de- *The great*
" ſart places heard him pray, in a pri- *Exemplar.*
" vacy he was born, in the wilderneſs
" he fed his thouſands, upon a mountain apart he

" was transfigured, upon a mountain he dyed, and " from a mountain he aſcended to his Father. In " which retirements his devotion certainly did re- " ceive the advantage of convenient circumſtances, " and himſelf in ſuch diſpoſitions twice had the op- " portunities of glory."

Indeed, the ſatisfactions and advantages of ſolitude (to a perſon that knows how to improve it) are very great, and far tranſcending thoſe of a ſecular and popular life. Firſt, as to pleaſure and ſatisfaction, whoſoever conſiders the great variety of mens humours, the peeviſhneſs of ſome, the pride and conceitedneſs of others, and the impertinence of moſt; he that conſiders what unreaſonable terms of communion ſome perſons impoſe upon thoſe that partake of their ſociety; how rare 'tis for a man to light upon a company, where, as his firſt ſalutation, he ſhall not preſently have a bottle thruſt to his noſe; he, I ſay, that conſiders theſe and a thouſand more grievances, wherewith the folly and ill nature of men have conſpir'd to burthen ſociety, will find, take one time with another, company is an occaſion of almoſt as much diſpleaſure as pleaſure. Whereas in the mean time the ſolitary and contemplative man ſits as ſafe in his retirement, as one of *Homer's* heroes in a cloud, and has this only trouble from the follies and extravagancies of men, that he pities them. He does not, it may be, laugh ſo loud, but he is better pleas'd: He is not perhaps ſo often merry, but neither is he ſo often diſguſted; he lives to himſelf and God, full of ſerenity and content.

And as the pleaſures and ſatisfactions of ſolitude exceed thoſe of a popular life, ſo alſo do the advantages. Of theſe there are two ſorts, moral and intellectual; to both which ſolitude is a particular friend.

friend. As to the firſt, it is plain that ſolitude is the proper opportunity of contemplation, which is both the foundation and the perfection of a religious life. " It is (as the ſame excellent perſon fore-cited ſays elſewhere of a ſingle life) " the huge advantage " of religion, the great opportunity for the retire- " ments of devotion, which being empty of cares is " full of prayers, being unmingled with the world, " is apt to converſe with God; and by not feeling " the warmth of a too forward and indulgent na- " ture, flames out with holy fires, till it be burning " like the cherubim, and the moſt extaſy'd order of " holy and unpolluted Spirits." And for this rea- ſon it was, that the antients choſe to build their altars and temples in groves and ſolitary receſſes; thereby intimating, that ſolitude was the beſt op- portunity of religion.

Neither are our intellectual advantages leſs in- debted to ſolitude. And here, tho' I have in a great meaſure anticipated this conſideration, (there being nothing neceſſarily requir'd to compleat the character of a wiſe man, beſides the knowledge of God and himſelf,) yet I ſhall not confine my ſelf to this inſtance, but deduce the matter farther, and venture to affirm, that all kinds of ſpeculative knowledge as well as practical, are beſt improv'd by ſolitude. Indeed there is much talk about the great benefit of keeping great men company, and thereupon 'tis uſually reckon'd among the diſadvan- tages of a country life, that thoſe of that condition want the opportunities of a learned converſation. But to confeſs the truth, I think there is not ſo much in it as people generally imagine. Indeed, were the ſouls of men lodg'd in tranſparent caſes,

that we might read their thoughts, would they communicate what they know, were it the faſhion to diſcourſe learnedly, it might be worth while perhaps to be ſometimes in the company of great men: But when it ſhall be counted a piece of errant pedantry, and defect of good breeding, to ſtart any queſtion of learning in company; when every man is as ſhy of his notions as of a fairy-treaſure; and makes his head not a repoſitory or exchequer of knowledge, but a grave to bury it in: a man may be a conſtant attendant at the conclaves of learned men all his life long, and yet be no more the wiſer for it, than a book-worm is for dwelling in Libraries; eſpecially when 'tis conſider'd what the prejudices of thoſe they call learned men are, how confuſed are their notions, and what with them paſſes for learning; namely, ſuch as conſiſts in an hiſtorical knowledge of books, in memory and imagination, and not in any clear intellectual ſight of things. And therefore to ſpeak ingeniouſly, I don't ſee for my part wherein the great advantage of great converſation lies, as the humours of men are pleas'd to order it. Were I to inform my ſelf in buſineſs, and the management of affairs, I would ſooner talk with a plain illiterate farmer or tradeſman, than the greateſt *virtuoſo* of the Society; and as for learning, (which is the only thing they are ſuppoſed able to diſcourſe well of,) that in point of civility they decline: So that I find I muſt take refuge at my ſtudy at laſt, and there redeem the time that I have loſt among the learned.

Of COURAGE.

ARISTOTLE in his Morals, begins the doctrine of virtues with Courage; which has found work for his interpreters to aſſign the reaſon of his method. But methinks, there is no great need they ſhould either ſtudy or differ much about it. For certainly, among all the virtues, this will juſtly challenge the precedency, and is the moſt cardinal and fundamental part of morality. This virtue is pre-requir'd to the ſuſception of all the reſt. For the very entrance into the ſchool of wiſdom and a virtuous courſe, is a ſtate of diſcipline, difficulty and hardſhip. And therefore 'tis *ſapere aude*, a great piece of daring and boldneſs to ſet up for a good man: Eſpecially, if to the proper difficulties and agonies of a virtuous engagement, we add thoſe calamities and ſtraits it oftentimes expoſes us to, through the malice and folly of the world. So that as *Plato* writ upon his ſchool, Ἀγεωμέτρητος μηδεὶς εἰσίτω· *Let none enter here that underſtands not Mathematicks*; it may be ſet as a *Motto* upon the ſchool of virtue, *Let none enter here that wants Courage.*

And as 'tis neceſſarily requiſite to the ſuſception of all other virtues, ſo it is their main ſupport, guardian and eſtabliſhment. Without this, every other virtue is precarious, and lies at the mercy of every croſs accident. Without this, let but a piſtol be held to the breaſt, and the ſevereſt chaſtity will be frighted into compliance, the moſt heroick friendſhip into treachery, and the moſt ardent piety into renunciation of God and religion. There is nothing among all the frailneſſes and uncertainties

of

of this ſublunary World, ſo tottering and unſtable as the virtue of a coward. He has that within him that upon occaſion will infallibly betray every virtue he has; and to ſecure him from ſin you muſt keep him from temptation. This was the principle the devil went upon in his encounter with *Job*, *Do but put forth thy hand*, (ſays he to God,) *and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* He was right enough in the propoſition, tho' miſtaken in the application.

Having now ſeen the uſefulneſs of this great virtue, 'twill be worth while to enquire a little into its nature. And that the rather, becauſe 'tis not only variouſly and falſly apprehended by the many, but perhaps too confuſedly and darkly deliver'd, even by moraliſts themſelves.

That which with the vulgar paſſes for Courage, is certainly nothing elſe but ſtupidity, deſperateneſs, or fool-hardineſs; a brutiſh ſort of knight-errantry, in ſeeking out needleſs encounters, and running into dangers without fear or wit; which is ſo far from having the fore-mention'd property of Courage, of being a guardian, and ſecurity of our virtues, that 'tis in it ſelf a ſin.

But are we like to have a better account of it from the moraliſts? Why they tell you that it is a mediocrity, between fear and boldneſs: So *Ariſtotle* in his Ethicks. But then as for defining what this mediocrity is, (wherein the very point of the buſineſs lies,) you are as much to ſeek as ever.

Others perhaps will tell you, that 'tis a firmneſs of mind in ſuſtaining evils, and undertaking dangers. According to thoſe two aſſignal parts of Courage, *ſuſtinere & aggredi.* But what it is thus firmly to ſuſtain or undertake an evil, or what evils are to be thus

thus ſuſtain'd or undertaken, is the main thing which we want to be made acquainted with.

In order therefore to the ſettling the point in hand, I conſider firſt in general, that Courage has evil of pain for its object; which in ſome circumſtances is to be choſen or ſubmitted to. Whence I form this general idea of Courage; That 'tis a firm and peremptory reſolution of mind to chuſe evil of pain in right circumſtances, or when 'tis truly eligible. This definition, I confeſs, runs in general terms, much like one of *Ariſtotle*'s; but I intended it for no other. Only it has this advantage above his, that it lays a foundation for one that is more particular.

For 'tis but here to ſubjoin when an evil is truly eligible, and the idea of Courage will be ſufficiently determinate and expreſs. Now to make a thing eligible, 'tis neceſſary that ſome way or other it appear good; evil being no way eligible under its own formality. And to make an evil put on the nature and appearance of good, two things are neceſſary. Firſt, That it be a leſſer evil than ſome other: And, ſecondly, that the chuſing of it be a neceſſary medium for the preventing of that other. Then, and in no other caſe, is evil truly eligible; and conſequently we ſhall not be miſtaken in the idea of Courage, if we define it to be ſuch a firm and conſtant ἕξις or diſpoſition of mind, whereby a man is fix'd and determin'd never to dread any evil, ſo far as to decline it when the chuſing it is the only remedy againſt a greater. And this is moſt eminently ſignaliz'd in the caſe of martyrdom, when a man ſubmits to the greateſt evils of pain, to avoid that much greater one of ſin. This is the very ſummity and perfection of Courage, that which an

Hannibal

Hannibal or a *Scipio* could never equal in all their gallantry and feats of war: And I dare venture to pronounce, that he that would rather die, or part with any worldly intereſt than commit a ſin, can never be a coward.

And here I cannot but take notice of a falſe notion of Honour and Courage, whereby the world has been generally abuſed; eſpecially thoſe men that make the higheſt pretenſions to both. According to theſe mens meaſures of things, 'tis ſufficient reaſon to poſt a man up for a coward if he refuſe a duel; and to merit a badge of honour from the Herald's office, if he accept it. Theſe men would be ready to laugh at me, I know, as a lover of paradoxes, ſhould I tell them that their characters muſt be quite tranſpoſed to make them true. And yet I cannot help it; ſo it falls out, that he who declines the duel, is indeed the man of Honour and Courage; and he who accepts it is the coward. For he who declines it deſpiſes the obloquy and ſcorn of the world, that he may approve himſelf to God and his own conſcience, would rather be pointed and hiſs'd at, than be damn'd; and ſo chuſes a leſſer evil to avoid a greater. But he that accepts the duel, ſo dreads the loſs of his credit among thoſe whoſe good opinion is of no value, that to avoid it, he chuſes to incur ſin and damnation; and ſo chuſes a greater evil to avoid a leſs. And if this be Courage, we muſt ſtrike it out of the catalogue of Virtues; for nothing is ſo, that is not under the direction of prudence; much leſs what is downright folly, and the very exaltation of madneſs.

Of

Of SERIOUSNESS.

SINCE I began to conſider ſo far as to make reflections upon my ſelf, the moſt early and prevailing diſpoſition which I obſerv'd, was an inclination to Seriouſneſs: And ſince I conſider'd the nature of things, and the circumſtances of human life, I found I had reaſon to thank the kind influence of my birth for making that my temper, which otherwiſe I muſt have been at more coſt to acquire.

For tho' it be generally reckon'd only as a ſemi-virtue, and by ſome as no virtue at all; yet certainly nothing is of greater advantage both as to intellectual and moral attainments, than to be of a ſerious, compos'd and recollected ſpirit. If it be not it ſelf a virtue, 'tis at leaſt the ſoil wherein it naturally grows, and the moſt viſible mark whereby to know thoſe that have it. This is that whereby a man is chiefly diſtinguiſh'd from a child, and a wiſe man from a fool. For (as the ſon of *Syrach* obſerves) *a man may be known by his look, and one that has underſtanding by his countenance, when thou meeteſt him*, Ecclus. xix. And again, ſpeaking of levity and diſſoluteneſs of behaviour, *A man's attire, exceſs of laughter and gate ſhew what he is*; that is, it ſhews he is none of the wiſeſt. And that this was his true meaning, we may be aſſur'd from another character of his, where he expreſly makes the ſigns of wiſdom and folly to conſiſt in theſe two properties, (*viz.*) That *a fool lifts up his voice with laughter, but a wiſe man does ſcarce ſmile a little*, Ecclus. xxi.

There is indeed a near relation between Seriouſneſs and Wiſdom, and one is the moſt excellent friend

friend to the other. A man of a ſerious, ſedate and conſiderate temper, as he is always in a ready diſpoſition for meditation, (the beſt improvement both of knowledge and manners,) ſo he thinks without diſturbance, enters not upon another notion till he is maſter of the firſt, and ſo makes clean work of it. Whereas a man of a looſe, volatile and ſhatter'd humour, thinks only by fits and ſtarts, now and then in a morning interval, when the ſerious mood comes upon him; and even then too, let but the leaſt trifle croſs his way, and his deſultorious fancy preſently takes the ſcent, leaves the unfiniſh'd and half mangled notion, and skips away in purſuit of the new game. So that altho' he conceives often, yet by ſome chance or other he always miſcarries, and the iſſues prove abortive.

Indeed nothing excellent can be done without Seriouſneſs, and he that courts wiſdom muſt be in earneſt. St. *James*, chap. i. 7. aſſures us, that 'tis to no purpoſe for a wavering and unſtable man to pray, becauſe he ſhall be ſure not to ſpeed. And as 'tis in vain for ſuch a one to pray, ſo is it in vain for him to ſtudy. For a man to pretend to work out a neat ſcheme of thoughts with a maggotty unſettled head, is as ridiculous and nonſenſical, as to think to write ſtrait in a jumbling coach, or to draw an exact picture with a palſy hand. No, he that will hit what he aims at, muſt have a ſteady hand, as well as a quick eye; and he that will think to any purpoſe, muſt have fixedneſs and compoſedneſs of humour, as well as ſmartneſs of parts.

And accordingly we find, that thoſe among the philoſophick ſects, that profeſs'd more than ordinary eminency in wiſdom or virtue, aſſum'd alſo a peculiar

peculiar gravity of habit, and ſolemnity of behaviour; and the moſt ſacred and myſterious rites of religion were uſually perform'd with ſilence; and that not only for decency, but for advantage. Thus the *Italians*, with the gravity of their behaviour, are alſo remarkable for their more than ordinary politeneſs and ingenuity, eſpecially for Poetry, Muſick and Painting, things which depend not only upon ſtrength of imagination, but require alſo great juſtneſs of thought, and exactneſs of judgment. And 'tis a known obſervation of *Ariſtotle's* concerning melancholy, that it furthers contemplation, and makes great wits. Thus again, the diſcipline of ſilence was a conſiderable part of the *Pythagorick* inſtitution: And we have it ſtoried of our bleſſed Lord himſelf, who was the wiſdom of his Father, that he never laugh'd.

But becauſe a ſolemn deportment may ſometimes diſguiſe an unthinking mind, and grave, in ſome men's dictionaries, ſignifies the ſame as dull, I ſhall put the character a little more home, and define more cloſely wherein the true idea of ſeriouſneſs conſiſts; or what it is to be in good earneſt, a ſerious man.

And firſt, I ſhall remove it from the neighbourhood of thoſe things, which by their ſymbolizing with it in outward appearance, prove oftentimes the occaſion of miſtake and confuſion. It does not therefore conſiſt in the moroſity of a *Cynick*, nor in the ſeverity of an *Aſcetick*, nor in the demureneſs of a *Preciſian*, nor in the deadneſs and ſullenneſs of a *Quaker*, nor in the ſolemn mien of an *Italian*, nor in the ſlow pace of a *Spaniard*: 'Tis neither in a drooping head, nor a mortify'd face, nor a primitive beard.

'Tis

'Tis ſomething very different, and much more excellent than all this, that muſt make up a ſerious man. And I believe I ſhall not miſrepreſent him, if I ſay, he is one that duly and impartially weighs the moments of things, ſo as neither to value trifles, nor deſpiſe things really excellent: That dwells much at home, and ſtudies to know himſelf as well as books or men: " That conſiders why he came into " the world, how great his buſineſs, and how ſhort " his ſtay in it; how uncertain 'tis when he ſhall " leave it; and whither a Sinner ſhall then betake " himſelf, when both Heaven and Earth ſhall fly from " the preſence of the judge, *Rev.* xx. That conſiders " God as always preſent, and the folly of doing what " muſt be repented of, and of going to Hell when a " man may go to Heaven. In one word, that knows " how to diſtinguiſh between a moment and eternity.

This is to be truly ſerious; and however the pretender to gaiety and lightſomneſs of humour may miſcall and ridicule it by the names of melancholy, dulneſs and ſtupidity, *&c.* he that is thus affected, cannot miſs of being good and wiſe here, and happy hereafter. And then 'twill be his turn to laugh, when the others ſhall mourn and weep.

Of the ſlightneſs of all ſecular, and the importance of minding our eternal intereſt.

IDleneſs and impertinence, a doing of nothing, or of nothing to the purpoſe, are always ſigns of a vain, looſe and inconſiderate ſpirit; but they are never more ſo, than where there is ſome very momentous and weighty buſineſs to be done. The

The man that ſleeps away his happy retirements, or, with the *Roman* Emperor, ſpends them in killing flies, betrays a great deal of weakneſs and incogitancy; but ſhould he do the ſame at the bar, when he's to plead for his life, he would certainly be thought a mere changeling or madman.

And yet this I fear will prove the caſe of the moſt of thoſe who ſtyle themſelves rational. For beſides that, the generality of men live at random, without any aim or deſign at all; and thoſe that propoſe ſome ends, ſeldom take up with any that are important and material; or if they do, they ſeldom proportion their care to the weight of things, but are ſerious in trifles, and trifling in things ſerious: I ſay, beſides all this, there is nothing relating purely to this world that can deſerve the name of buſineſs, or be worth the ſerious thoughts of him who has an immortal ſoul; and a ſalvation to work out with fear and trembling. The greateſt ſecular affairs and intereſt, are but ſpecious trifles; and all our deſigns and employments about 'em, excentrical motions, and ſolemn impertinencies.

And yet this is made the centre of all our ſtudies and endeavours; the great bent of the world points this way: Hence are taken the meaſures of wiſdom and prudence; and religion it ſelf is forced to truckle to worldly policy. Whereas in the mean time, there is an affair of grand importance, and wherein all mankind are deeply concern'd; and ſuch as really deſerves all that care and ſolicitude which we laviſh away upon other things, and infinitely more (tho' perhaps it might be ſecured with leſs) and yet this is the thing which by many is utterly neglected, by the moſt is leaſt cared for, and by none ſufficiently regarded. So that conſidering the general practice of the world, I think

there are very few in it, to whom that will not be a very proper and ſeaſonable admonition, which our bleſſed Lord gave to his ſolicitous and over-buſie diſciple, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful.*

To cure therefore (if poſſible) this great folly, I have two propoſitions to offer; Firſt, That no intereſt relating purely to this preſent world, is of any great moment or concern to man. Secondly, That to be very careful of our final intereſt, and to make ſure to our ſelves a happy eternity, is indeed a thing of vaſt moment and importance.

The firſt of theſe, I know, will ſeem very ſtrange and paradoxical to one that takes a proſpect of mankind, and contemplates the great ſtir and hurry of the world, the plottings of ſtateſmen, the emulations of courtiers, and the ambition of princes; how buſie men are in their ſeveral concerns; what variety of deſigns are on foot; with what trembling eagerneſs they are proſecuted, and what griet attends our diſappointments. Sure after ſuch a ſcene as this, one would be tempted to think, that there muſt be ſomething very conſiderable in human life, and that men had notable intereſts here at ſtake, it being a reproach to human nature, that the world ſhould ſo generally combine to make ſuch ado about nothing.

But yet, that this is their folly; " Not to inſiſt " upon that univerſal vanity which the wiſe and " great trier of the world has charged upon it, that " *Hope deferred maketh the heart ſick*, Prov. xiii. and " yet fruition does not cure it: That we are diſ- " appointed in our enjoyments, as well as in our " loſſes; and yet that 'tis our hard fate, to weep " at the funeral of our departed pleaſures, tho' we " were little the happier for them when we had " them;

" them; that our greateſt pleaſures are moſt tran-
" ſient; and great mirth always ends in heavineſs
" and demiſſion of ſpirit; that the more we love
" and enjoy, the more we venture, and put our
" ſelves farther within the reach of fortune; that
" the greateſt men are not always the moſt con-
" tented; and that they who are moſt envy'd by
" others, think themſelves more fit for their pity:
Not to inſiſt, I ſay, on theſe, or the like conſide-
rations, I ſhall fix only upon one; whereby I think
'twill plainly appear, that there can be no intereſt
relating purely to this world, that is of any great
moment or concern to man; and that is, the ſhort-
neſs and uncertainty of our abode here.

The life of man, in the book of *Wiſdom*, is com-
pared to a ſhadow. Now beſides that the reſem-
blance holds in many conſiderable reſpects, as in
that it is partly life, and partly death, as the other
is partly light, and partly darkneſs; in that like
a ſhadow, wherever it paſſes it leaves no track be-
hind it; in that it ſeems to be ſomething, when
indeed it is nothing; and that 'tis always altering,
and ends on a ſudden; and when at its full height
and prime, is often neareſt to declenſion, as a ſha-
dow is, to diſappear when at full length. There is
yet another inſtance of reſemblance, which has a
more particular aptneſs to our preſent purpoſe.
The ſhadow can continue no longer at the utmoſt,
than the light of the Sun keeps its reſidence above
the horizontal line, which is but a little portion of
time; but it may fall much ſhort of that period,
by the interpoſition of a cloud; and when that
may be is as uncertain as the weather; and de-
pends upon a thouſand accidents.

And thus 'tis with our lives. No man can leng-
then out his days beyond that natural term which

is ſet him by the temperament of the firſt qualities, which yet are of ſuch jarring and unſociable natures, that they can't dwell long together in a vital amity. But then how far, and how many ways he may fall ſhort of that compaſs, depends upon ſo many hidden cauſes, and ſo many little accidents, that it may be reckon'd among the greateſt of uncertainties. So that there is nothing in all human life ſo frail and uncertain, as life it ſelf.

A conſideration ſufficient to depretiate and vilifie all the entertainments and intereſts of the animal life; and to call off our care from the objects of ſecular happineſs, tho' there were no other vanity in them. For were they never ſo good and ſolid in themſelves, yet the foundation on which they ſtand, is ſo weak and rotten, that 'tis dangerous leaning hard upon them. They would be even upon this ſuppoſition, like *Nebuchadnezzar*'s ſtatue, made up indeed of rich metal, but founded upon feet of clay. And upon this account they are to be eſteem'd as vile and contemptible as they are ruinous.

This is a conſideration indeed that has but little effect in the world, and the reaſon is, becauſe few give any ſerious heed and attention to it. They know it indeed habitually, and muſt confeſs it, if put to the queſtion, but it lies dormant in 'em, and they ſeldom actually attend to it. And therefore 'tis that the voice bids the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Cry* and proclaim it aloud, that *all fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof as the flower of the field.* He is bid to cry aloud, thereby intimating both the importance of the thing, and the general ſtupidity of men in not conſidering it.

But

But if men would but often and ſeriouſly meditate upon the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of Life, I perſuade my ſelf they would not ſet their hearts much upon any thing in it, but would look upon all its pleaſures, honours and profits, with the ſame indifferency that the haſty traveller does upon the ſpacious fields and meadows which he paſſes by. For to what purpoſe, I pray, ſhould man, who holds his tenement here by ſuch a ſhort and unſtable tenure, that can't live long, and may dye preſently, be ſo buſie and thoughtful about worldly concerns? The antient Patriarchs, tho' their ſpan was ſo very much longer than ours, thought it hardly worth while to build houſes, but contented themſelves to grow gray in tents; and what do we mean, who in compariſon to them art but Ἐφήμεροι, people for a day, by plunging our ſelves ſo deeply into care and trouble? Is there any thing among the actions of either brutes or madmen, ſo ſilly and irrational as this?

But to be a little particular; to what purpoſe ſhould man, who walketh in a vain ſhadow, diſquiet himſelf alſo thus in vain, and be ſo greedy in heaping up riches, when he can't tell who ſhall gather them? To what purpoſe ſhould a man trouble both the world's and his own reſt to make himſelf great; For beſides the emptineſs of the thing, the play will quickly be done, and the actors muſt all retire into a ſtate of equality, and then it matters not who perſonated the Emperor, or who the Slave. To what purpoſe ſhould a man be very earneſt in the purſuit of fame? He muſt ſhortly dye, and ſo muſt thoſe too who admire him. Nay, I could almoſt ſay, to what purpoſe ſhould a man lay himſelf out upon ſtudy, and drudge ſo laboriouſly in the mines of learning? He's no ſooner a little wi-

ſer than his brethren, but death thinks him ripe for his ſickle, and for ought we know, after all his pains and induſtry, in the next world, an ideot or a mechanick will be as forward as he. To what purpoſe, laſtly, does a tyrant oppreſs his people, tranſgreſs thoſe bounds which wiſe nature has ſet him, invade his neighbour's Countries, deprive the innocent and peaceable of their liberty, ſack Cities, plunder Provinces, depopulate Kingdoms, and almoſt put the foundations of the earth out of courſe; to what purpoſe is all this? *Thou fool*, ſays our bleſſed Saviour, *this night thy ſoul ſhall be required of thee; and then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?*

There is certainly nothing in all nature ſo ſtrange and unaccountable as the actions of ſome men. *They ſee*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *that wiſe men alſo dye and periſh together as well as the ignorant and fooliſh, and leave their riches for others, and yet they think* (at leaſt act as if they did) *that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and that their dwelling places ſhall endure from one generation to another, and call their lands after their own names.*

This they think *is* their wiſdom, but the Pſalmiſt aſſures them 'tis *their fooliſhneſs*, and ſuch a fooliſhneſs too as makes them comparable *to the beaſts that periſh*, however *their poſterity* (who ſhould be wiſer) may *praiſe their ſaying*. And certainly the learned Apoſtle was of the ſame mind, when from this principle, *the time is ſhort*, he deduces the very ſame concluſion we have hitherto pleaded for, that we ſhould be very indifferent and unconcern'd about any worldly good or evil, That *they that have wives ſhould be as though they had none; and they that weep as though they wept not; they that rejoyce as though they*

they rejoyced not; they that buy as though they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe this world as not abuſing it, for the faſhion of this world paſſes away. It does ſo, and for that reaſon there is nothing in this life to be very much lov'd, or very much fear'd; eſpecially if we conſider what a grand intereſt we have all of us at ſtake in the other world. For as 'tis with the ſufferings, ſo is it with the enjoyment of this preſent time, they are neither of them *worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed.*

We have ſeen how frivolous and unconcerning the greateſt affairs of this world are, how unworthy to be made the objects of our ſolicitude, much more to be the buſineſs of our lives; we have weigh'd them in the balance, and they are found wanting. But man is a creature of brisk and active faculties, and is there no employment for him? Yes, as God has furniſh'd him with powers, ſo alſo has he aſſign'd him a work; and ſuch a one too as is to be perform'd with fear and trembling. There is a good fight to be fought, there is a whole body of ſin to be deſtroy'd, there are paſſions to be mortify'd, habits to be unlearnt, affections to be purify'd, virtues and holy diſpoſitions to be acquired, acts of virtue to be oppoſed againſt acts of ſin, and habits againſt habits: In a word, there is a Heaven to be obtain'd, and a Hell to be avoided. This indeed is a great work, and of great concernment to be done, and ſuch as calls for our principal, (I could almoſt ſay our whole) care and diligence. The great neceſſity of which, for more diſtinctneſs ſake, I ſhall repreſent in a few conſiderations.

And firſt, it highly concerns us to be very careful concerning our final intereſt, becauſe of the

vaſt, the infinite moment of the thing. For certainly it can be no leſs, whether a man ſhall be damned or ſaved, eternally happy, or eternally miſerable. No man certainly that thinks at all, can think this an indifferent matter; or if he does, he will one day be ſadly convinc'd of the contrary, when he ſhall curſe the day of his birth, and wiſh for the mercy of annihilation. The loweſt conception we can frame of the condition of the damn'd, is an utter excluſion from the beatifick preſence of God. And tho' the non-enjoyment of this be no great puniſhment to ſenſual men in this ſtate and region of exile; who perhaps would be content that God ſhould keep Heaven to himſelf, ſo he would let them have the free uſe of the earth; yet hereafter, when the powers of their ſouls ſhall be awaken'd to their full vigour and activity, when they ſhall have a lively and thorough apprehenſion of true happineſs, and of the infinite beauties of the ſupreme Good, there will ariſe ſuch a vehement thirſt, ſuch an intenſe longing in the ſoul, as will infinitely exceed the moſt exalted languiſhments of love, the higheſt droughts of a fever. The ſoul will then point to the centre of happineſs with her full bent and verticity, which yet ſhe ſhall find utterly out of her reach; and ſo full of deſire, and full of deſpair, ſhe ſhall lament both her folly and her miſery to eternal ages. And who is able to dwell even with theſe everlaſting burnings?

But ſecondly, As an argument for our great care, we may conſider, that as the intereſt is great, ſo a more than ordinary care is neceſſary to ſecure it. And that upon ſeveral accounts. 1. Becauſe our redemption by Chriſt is not our immediate and actual diſcharge from ſin, (as ſome who are for an eaſie Chriſtianity ſeem to conceive of it) but only

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an inſtating us into a capacity of pardon and reconciliation, which is to be actually obtain'd by the performance of conditions; without which, we ſhall be ſo far from being the better for what has been done and ſuffer'd for us, that our condemnation will be ſo much the heavier, for neglecting to finiſh ſo great ſalvation. Finiſh it, I mean, by fulfilling the conditions upon which it depends. So that the greateſt care and concern is now neceſſary, not only that we may be the better for what our Redeemer has done for us, but that we may not be the worſe.

2. Becauſe the conditions of our ſalvation, tho' temper'd with much mercy and accommodation to human infirmity, are yet ſo difficult, as to engage us to put forth our whole might to the work. A great part of chriſtianity is very harſh to fleſh and blood; however, to the habituated diſcipline, Chriſt's yoke may be eaſie, and his burden light. And accordingly, the path that leads to life is call'd narrow; and the gate (tho' open'd by our Saviour) is yet ſo ſtrait, that we are bid to ſtrive to enter in at it. And the righteous ſcarcely are ſav'd.

Again, becauſe there is a ſtrong confederacy againſt us among the powers of darkneſs. We have a very potent and malicious enemy, who envies man ſhould arrive to thoſe happy manſions from whence himſelf by tranſgreſſion fell, and accordingly there is a great woe pronounc'd by the Angel againſt the inhabitants of the earth, becauſe the Devil is come down among them, having great wrath. And this is made by the Apoſtle himſelf, an argument for more than ordinary care and circumſpection: *Be ſober*, ſays he, *be vigilant, becauſe your adverſary the devil, walks about as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour.*

Again,

Again, becauſe we have but a little time for this our great work, and that too very precarious and uncertain. Our glaſs holds but very little ſand, tho' 'twere to be all ſpent, and drawn out in the running. But there are alſo ſeveral accidental impediments that may intercept its paſſage: And therefore as this was alledg'd as an argument for indifferency about the things of this world, ſo for the ſame reaſon, it concerns us to be eminently careful, in the grand buſineſs of the next. He that duly conſiders how many perſons dye ſuddenly, how many more may, and that none can engage for it that he himſelf ſhall not, muſt needs confeſs himſelf extremely concern'd to improve this ſhort, this uncertain opportunity, this only time of probation; and to work with all his might while 'tis day, before the *night come, when no man work.*

Laſtly, It concerns us to uſe a more than ordinary care and diligence in ſecuring this our great intereſt; becauſe after all our care and vigilancy, all our ſtrictneſſes and ſeverities, we don't know the juſt and preciſe meaſures of qualification; and how much trimming of our lamps is requiſite, to fit 'em for the ſanctuary of God. For tho' we are well aſſured in general, from the terms of the evangelical covenant, that if we repent we ſhall be forgiven, yet there is a great latitude in repentance; and what degree in ſome caſes will be available, is a ſecret God has kept to himſelf. For we don't know the full heinouſneſs of our ſins, nor how far God was provoked by 'em; nor conſequently, by what degrees of ſorrow and amendment he will be appeas'd. And 'tis moſt certain there is a mighty difference. To *Simon Magus* 'twas almoſt a deſperate caſe: *If peradventure the thoughts of thy heart may*

be

be forgiven thee, Acts 8. 22. And ſome are ſaid to be ſav'd with fear, and as it were, pull'd out of the fire. And we know what the great Apoſtle has ſaid, *I knew nothing by my ſelf, yet I am not thereby juſtify'd.* All which argues a great latitude and variety, even in neceſſary preparation; and how to ſtate the matter exactly we don't always know; and therefore as far as we are able, ſhould be ſure to do enough; for we may eaſily do too little, and can never do too much in a matter of ſuch high importance.

From all which I conclude, firſt, That thoſe who withdraw themſelves (as far as is conſiſtent with charity, and the proſecution of the publick good) from the noiſe, hurry and buſineſs of the world, that they may apply themſelves more ſerenely and entirely to a life of devotion and religion, and more freely and undiſtractedly attend upon the grand concern of another world, act very wiſely and prudently. For this is wiſdom, to take a right eſtimate of things; to proportion our care to their value; and to mind that moſt, which is moſt concerning. This is what the Apoſtle commends, *to lay aſide every weight*, that we may be the ſurer to win the great prize, and *ſo to run as to obtain*. This, laſtly, is the very part which *Mary* choſe; and which our Lord aſſures us ſhall *never be taken away from her*.

Again I conclude, That all thoſe, who are either wholly negligent of this their grand intereſt, or that do not principally regard it; and as our Saviour ſpeaks, in the firſt place *ſeek the kingdom of God*; that are more intent upon this world than the next, that will venture to play the knave for a little preferment; that make uſe of religion as an inſtru-

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ment for ſecular deſigns : In one word, that in any kind forfeit their great intereſt in the other world, for a little in this, are the greateſt fools in nature. This meaſure, I confeſs, will take in a great many; and ſome perhaps who would think it a great affront to be reckon'd of the number. But it can't be help'd, the charge is moſt unqueſtionably true; and they themſelves, however conceited of their wit and parts now, will once be of the ſame opinion, when they ſhall ſay, *We fools thought his life madneſs.*

God grant we may all ſo number our days, and ſo compare our two intereſts, as to apply our hearts to greater wiſdom.

A Metaphyſical Eſſay, towards the demonſtration of a GOD, from the ſteady and immutable nature of Truth.

Sect. I.

How difficult a thing 'tis to demonſtrate a God by any new medium; and how far the preſent Eſſay may pretend to do ſo.

1. IT has been the curious employment of ſo many and ſo excellent pens, to demonſtrate the exiſtence of a God; and this they have done with ſuch variety of argument, moral, phyſical and metaphyſical, that however eaſie it may be to contrive new poſtures, and ring other changes upon the ſame bells, 'tis yet almoſt as difficult to find out an argument for the proof of a God, that has not been uſed already, as to reſiſt the cogency of thoſe that have. So that here, if any where, that of *Solomon* is more than ordinarily verify'd, *The thing that has been, it is that which ſhall be; and that which is done, is that which ſhall be done; and there is no new thing under the ſun*, Eccleſ. i. 9.

2. The neweſt indeed that has of late years appear'd to the world, is that of the celebrated *Deſ-Cartes*, taken from the idea of God, conſider'd both abſolutely in its ſelf, as including all kinds and degrees of perfection; and conſequently, exiſtence; and as 'tis ſubjected in the mind of man, which (as

(as he contends) could never have had ſuch an idea, were there not ſomething which had all that perfection in it formally or eminently, which is in the idea objectively.

3. Now tho' this procedure of his be extraordinarily fine and ſubtile, and ſuch as (to the firſt part at leaſt) will appear no leſs ſtrong and concluding to any capable and indifferent perſon, that conſiders it as 'tis manag'd at large by its ingenious author, yet this was not a notion (at leaſt as to the former part) wholly new, but only revived, with ſome improvement, by him. For *Aquinas* had before touch'd upon the firſt part of this argument, under this queſtion, *Utrum Deum eſſe ſit per ſe notum*, tho' for the reaſons there ſpecify'd, he thought it not to be concluſive. The ſame argument we find alſo touch'd upon by the ſubtile Doctor *Duns Scotus*, in his conſideration of the ſame queſtion, *Lib.* 1. *Diſtinct.* 2. *Qu.* 2.

4. I ſpeak not this to diminiſh one ray from the glory of that incomparable ſpeculatiſt; that which I remark here, is not the barrenneſs of his invention, but that of the exhauſted ſubject. The matter had been ſqueezed before almoſt to the laſt drop; and his only fault was, that he was not born ſooner. Which might be a ſufficient apology, if this procedure of mine prove not entirely new and unblown upon. Whether it be or no, 'tis not poſſible (without examining all the books in the world) abſolutely to determine. Thus much I believe I may venture to ſay, that 'tis no where univerſally receiv'd, nor by any that I know of, induſtriouſly and profeſſedly managed: And that laſtly, 'tis as new as the matter will now afford; and conſequently, as any man in reaſon ought to expect.

SECT.

SECT. II.

The various acceptations of Truth; and which that is, which is made the ground of the preſent demonſtration.

1. HAving undertaken to demonſtrate the exiſtence of God, from the ſteady and immutable nature of truth, I am firſt to diſtinguiſh the equivocalneſs or latitude of the word, and then to point out to that determinate part, which I intend for the ground of my demonſtration.

2. The moſt general partition of truth, is, into truth of the thing, and truth of the underſtanding; or (according to the language of the ſchools) truth of the object, and truth of the ſubject. Both of theſe again have a double ſubdiviſion. For by truth of the object, may be underſtood either that tranſcendental verity, which is convertible with *Ens*, and runs through the whole circle of being, whereby every thing is really what it is; which is ſimple truth. Or elſe, certain relations and habitudes of things one towards another, whether affirmatively or negatively, which is complex truth.

3. And ſo again, by truth of the ſubject, may be underſtood either a due conformity between the underſtanding and the object, when I compound what is compounded, and divide what is divided; which is logical truth. Or elſe a due conformity between the words of the underſtanding, when I ſpeak as I think; which is moral truth or veracity.

4. Now

4. Now the truth, upon whoſe immutable nature I build the demonſtration of a God, is not that of the ſubject, but that of the object. Nor that neither according to its ſimple and tranſcendental acceptation, but as it ſignifies certain immutable relations and habitudes of things one towards another, by way of affirmation and negation, which is truth of the object complex.

SECT. III.

That there are ſuch relations and habitudes of things towards one another; and that they are ſteady and immutable.

1. TWO things are here aſſerted, firſt, That there are relations and habitudes of things towards one another. And ſecondly, that they are ſteady and immutable. Firſt, I ſay, there are certain relations and habitudes betwixt thing and thing. Thus there is a certain habitude between ſome premiſſes, and ſome concluſions; for any thing will not follow from any thing; between ſome objects and ſome faculties; between ſome ends and ſome means; between ſome ſubjects, and ſome predicates, and the like.

2. This is as true, as that there is any ſuch thing as truth. For truth is nothing elſe, but the compoſition or diviſion of ideas, according to their reſpective habitudes and relations. And without truth, there can be no ſuch thing as knowledge; for knowledge is truth of the ſubject: 'Tis a man's thinking of things as they are; and that ſuppoſes truth of the object. Which whoſoever denies, contradicts

tradicts himſelf, and eſtabliſhes the propoſition which he deſign'd to overthrow; and conſequently, univerſal ſcepticiſm is the very extremity of nonſenſe and inconſiſtency.

3. And as there are certain habitudes and relations between things; ſo ſecondly, ſome of them are ſteady and immutable, that never were made by any underſtanding or will, nor can ever be unmade or null'd by them; but have a fix'd and unalterable θέσις, from everlaſting to everlaſting. And conſequently, there are not only truths, but eternal truths.

4. As firſt in general, 'tis a propoſition of neceſſary and eternal truth, that there muſt be ever ſuch a thing as truth, or that ſomething muſt be true; for let it be affirm'd or denyed, truth thruſts in upon us either way. And ſo ſecondly, There are many particular propoſitions of eternal and unchangeable verity; as in Logick, that the cauſe is always before the effect in order of nature; in Phyſicks, that all local motion is by ſucceſſion; in Metaphyſicks, that nothing can be, and not be, at once; in Mathematicks, that all right angles are equal; that thoſe lines which are parallel to the ſame right line, are alſo parallel to each other, &c. Theſe and ſuch like are ſtanding and irrepealable truths, ſuch as have no precarious exiſtence, or arbitrarious dependence upon any will or underſtanding whatſoever; and ſuch as all intellectual operations do not make, but ſuppoſe; it being as much againſt the nature of underſtanding, to make that truth which it ſpeculates, as 'tis againſt the nature of the eye, to create that light by which it ſees; or of an image, to make that object which it repreſents.

SECT. IV.

That ſince there are eternal and immutable verities or habitudes of things, the ſimple eſſences of things muſt be alſo eternal and immutable.

1. HAving gain'd this point, that there are eternal and immutable verities or habitudes of things; the next will be, that upon this *poſtulatum* it neceſſarily follows, that the ſimple eſſences of things muſt be alſo eternal and immutable. For as there can be no truth of the ſubject, without truth of the object to which it may be conformable, (as was before obſerv'd) ſo neither can there be truth of the object complex, without truth of the object ſimple.

2. This will appear undeniably true to any one that attends to the idea of objective truth complex; which is nothing elſe, but certain habitudes of reſpects betwixt thing and thing, as to compoſition or diviſion. For how can there be any ſuch habitudes or relations, without the ſimple eſſences themſelves from which they reſult? As for inſtance, How can any mathematical propoſition, ſuppoſe that of *Euclid*, that if two circles touch one another inwardly, they have not the ſame common centre, have this habitude, unleſs there be two ſuch diſtinct ſimple eſſences, as circle and centre? Theſe habitudes can no more ſubſiſt by themſelves, than any other relations can; they muſt have their ſimple eſſences, as the other have their ſubject and term; upon the poſition of which, they immediately reſult.

3. If

3. If therefore there can be no truth of the object complex, without truth of the object ſimple; and there can be no habitudes and relations of compoſition and diviſion, without the ſimple eſſences themſelves, it follows, that whenſoever the one does exiſt, the other muſt exiſt alſo; and conſequently, if the one be eternal, the other muſt be eternal alſo; and ſo (to recur to the former inſtance) if it be a propoſition of eternal truth, that if two circles touch one another inwardly, they have not the ſame common centre, the two diſtinct ſimple eſſences of circle and centre, muſt be from eternity alſo; and conſequently, the ſimple eſſences of things are eternal and immutable; which was the point to be here demonſtrated.

SECT. V.

That the ſimple eſſences of things being not eternal in their natural ſubſiſtences, muſt be ſo in their ideal ſubſiſtences or realities.

1. FRom the eternity of eſſential habitudes, we have demonſtrated the neceſſity, that the ſimple eſſences of things ſhould be eternal. And now, ſince they are not eternal (as is too plain to need proof) in their natural ſubſiſtences, it follows, that they muſt be eternal in their ideal ſubſiſtences or realities.

2. For there are but theſe two conceivable ways how any thing may be ſuppoſed to exiſt, either naturally or ideally, either out of all underſtanding, or within ſome underſtanding. If therefore the

ſimple eſſences of things do exiſt eternally, but not in nature, then they muſt exiſt eternally in their ideas. Again, if the ſimple eſſences of things are eternal, but not out of all underſtanding, it remains that they muſt have this their eternal exiſtence in ſome underſtanding. Without which indeed it is not poſſible to conceive how they ſhould have any ſuch exiſtence.

SECT. VI.

That there is therefore an eternal mind or underſtanding, omniſcient, immutable, and endow'd with all poſſible perfection, the ſame which we call God.

1. THis reaſonably follows from the concluſion of the foregoing Section, and that according to the double poſture in which it it diſpoſed. For firſt of all, if the ſimple eſſences of things do exiſt eternally in their ideas, then there are ideas, and theſe ideas are eternal, and theſe eternal ideas of things naturally lead us to an eternal and univerſal being, who is infinite in being, and has in himſelf all the degrees of being, or is indued with all poſſible perfection, and ſo has the perfection of all other beings in himſelf, whereby he becomes univerſally repreſentative of all other beings, which univerſal and all-repreſentative being can be no other than that eternal mind which we call God. And ſo again, if the ſimple eſſences of things have a real and eternal exiſtence or being in ſome underſtanding (as is moſt reaſonable to be conceiv'd, ſuppoſing

poſing them to have any ſuch eternal being at all) then what conſequence can be more plain, than that there is a mind or underſtanding eternally exiſting? An eſſence can no more eternally exiſt in a temporary underſtanding, than a body can be infinitely extended in a finite ſpace. The mind therefore wherein it does exiſt, muſt be eternal; there is therefore in the firſt place, an eternal mind.

2. 'Twill follow alſo, in the next place, that this mind is omniſcient as well as eternal. For that mind which is eternally fraught with the ſimple eſſences of things, muſt needs contain alſo in it ſelf all the ſeveral habitudes and reſpects of them; theſe neceſſarily ariſing from the other by way of natural reſult. For as before, the argument was good from the habitudes of things to their ſimple eſſences; ſo is it as good backwards, from the ſimple eſſences of things to their habitudes. But theſe are the ſame with truth. That mind therefore which has all theſe, has all truths; which is the ſame as to be omniſcient.

3. 'Twill follow hence alſo, in the next place, that this mind is immutable as well as omniſcient and eternal. For if that mind, which has exiſting in it ſelf from all eternity all the ſimple eſſences of things, and conſequently, all their poſſible *ſcheſes* or habitudes, ſhould ever change, there would ariſe a new *ſchefis* in this mind that was not before, which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. 'Tis impoſſible therefore, that this mind ſhould ever undergo any mutation; eſpecially if theſe eternal ideas and habitudes be one and the ſame with this mind, as I have abundantly proved elſewhere.

4. Laſtly, 'Twill follow, that this mind is not only eternal, immutable, and omniſcient, but that in a word, 'tis endow'd with all poſſible perfection.

For beſides that, if it were not endued with all poſſible perfection, it could not have the perfections of all other beings in it, and ſo be univerſally repreſentative, to have and it ſelf to be all the eſſences and habitudes of things, is to have, and to be all that can poſſibly be; to be the rule and meaſure of all perfection; to be ſupreme in the ſcale of being; and to be the root and ſpring of all entity; which is the ſame as to be God. This mind therefore ſo accompliſh'd is no other than God; and conſequently 'tis reaſonable to think that there is a God: Which was the thing I undertook to make appear to be reaſonable.

POSTSCRIPT.

I Know but of one place that is liable to any reaſonable exception; and that is in the fourth Section. The propoſition there maintain'd is this, "That ſince there are eternal and immutable ve-"rities or habitudes of things, the ſimple eſſences "of things muſt be alſo eternal and immutable". Here it may be objected, that theſe habitudes are not attributed abſolutely to the ſimple eſſences as actually exiſting, but only hypothetically, that whenſoever they ſhall exiſt, they ſhall alſo carry ſuch relations to one another. There is you'll ſay only an hypothetical connexion between the ſubject and the predicate, not an abſolute poſition of either.

But in anſwer to this I might plead firſt, that theſe habitudes are not (as is ſuppoſed in the objection) only by way of hypotheſis, but abſolutely attributed to the ſimple eſſences as actually exiſting. For when I ſay, for inſtance, that every part of

of a circle is equally diſtant from the centre, this propoſition does not hang in ſuſpence, then to be verified when the things ſhall exiſt in nature, but is at preſent actually true, as true as it ever will or can be; and conſequently may I not thence infer, that the things themſelves already are, ſince they are actually related, and ſince they are eternally related, that therefore they eternally are.

But ſecondly, Suppoſe I grant what the objector would have, that theſe habitudes are not abſolutely attributed to the ſimple eſſences, but only by way of hypotheſis; yet I don't ſee what he can gain by this conceſſion. For thus much at leaſt is attributed to the ſimple eſſences at preſent, that whenſoever they ſhall exiſt, ſuch and ſuch habitudes will attend them. I ſay, thus much is attributed actually, and at preſent: But now how can any thing be ſaid of that which is not? The things therefore themſelves really and actually are. There is I confeſs no neceſſity they ſhould exiſt in nature, (which is all that the objection proves); but exiſt they muſt, ſince of nothing there can be no affection. There is therefore another way of exiſting beſides that *in rerum natura*; namely, in the *Mundus Archetypus*, or the ideal world; where all the *Rationes rerum*, or ſimple eſſences of things, whereof there are ſtanding and immutable affirmations and negations, have an eternal and immutable exiſtence, before ever they enter upon the ſtage of nature.

Nor ought this ideal way of ſubſiſting to ſeem ſtrange, when even while things have a natural ſubſiſtence, the propoſitions concerning them are not verify'd according to their natural, but according to their ideal ſubſiſtences. Thus we demonſtrate ſeveral propoſitions concerning a right line,

a circle, &c. and yet 'tis moſt certain, that none of theſe are to be found in nature, according to that exactneſs ſuppoſed in the demonſtration. Such and ſuch attributes therefore belong to them, not as they are in nature, but as they are in their ideas. And if this be true in propoſitions, whoſe ſubjects are in nature, much more is it in eternal propoſitions, whoſe ſimple eſſences have not always a natural exiſtence. Theſe can no other ways be verify'd but by the co-eternal exiſtence of ſimple eſſences in the ideal world.

One thing I have more to add in the vindication of this Eſſay; Whereas in the third Section it was aſſerted, that the nature of truth is ſteady and immutable, and ſuch as has no precarious exiſtence or arbitrarious dependence upon any underſtanding whatever; and yet in the fifth Section 'tis affirm'd, that it owes its exiſtence to ſome mind or other; leſt one part of this meditation ſhould be thought to claſh againſt another, I thought it requiſite to adjuſt this ſeeming contradiction. For the clearing of which, we muſt be beholden to that diſtinction of a Platonick Author, of the divine mind into νῦς νοερὸς and νῦς νοητὸς, conceptive and exhibitive. Truth does by no means depend upon any mind as conceptive, whether human or divine; but is ſuppoſed by it; which is the ſenſe of the third Section. But upon mind as exhibitive, it may and does ultimately depend; ſo that if there were no God or eternal mind, there could be no truth; which is the ſenſe of the fifth Section. So that here is no contradiction, but all harmony and agreement.

The Chriſtian Law aſſerted and vindicated: Or a general Apology for the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, *both as to the obligativeneſs and reaſonableneſs of the inſtitution.*

1. I Deſign here to conſider two things concerning Chriſtianity:

Firſt, That it is a ſtate of ſervice.

Secondly, that it is a reaſonable ſervice.

The eviction of theſe two propoſitions, will contain both the aſſertion of the chriſtian law, and its vindication; and be a plenary juſtification of its divine author, from the imputation of two ſorts of adverſaries; thoſe that reflect upon his wiſdom, by ſuppoſing that he requires nothing to be done by his ſervants; and thoſe that reflect upon his goodneſs, by ſuppoſing him a hard maſter; and that he requires unreaſonable performances.

2. I begin therefore with the firſt propoſition concerning the chriſtian inſtitution, that it is a ſervice. It is moſt certain, that the chriſtian religion, according to the genuine ſenſe and deſign of its divine author, is the moſt wiſe and excellent inſtitution that could poſſibly be framed, both for the glory of the divine attributes, and the beſt intereſt of mankind. And without controverſie (if we

we take it as 'tis exhibited to us in the inſpired writings) *great is the myſtery of Godlineſs*, 1. Tim. v. 16. But if we conſult the perverſe gloſſes and comments of ſome of our Chriſtian Rabbins, and take our meaſures of the Chriſtian Religion from thoſe ill-favour'd ſchemes and draughts of it we meet with in ſome ſyſtems; as ſome chriſtians are the worſt of men, ſo will their religion appear to be the worſt of religions, a ſenſeleſs and ridiculous inſtitution; not worthy the contrivance of a wiſe politician, much leſs of him who is the wiſdom of the Father. It fares here with chriſtianity, as with a picture that is drawn at ſo many remote hands, till at length it degenerates from the original truth, and wants an under-title to diſcover whoſe it is. And indeed, whatever declamations are made againſt Judaiſm and Paganiſm, the worſt enemies of the chriſtian religion, are ſome of thoſe that profeſs and teach it. For if it be in reality, as ſome (who call themſelves orthodox) deſcribe it, I may boldly ſay, that 'tis neither for the reputation of God to be the author of ſuch a religion, nor for the intereſt of men to be guided by it; and that as *Sin took occaſion by the law*, Rom. vii. 11. ſo may it (and that more juſtly) by the Goſpel too, to deceive and ruin the world; by that Goſpel which was intended as the inſtrument both of its temporal and eternal welfare.

3. For if you look upon chriſtianity as ſome men are pleaſed to hold the proſpective, it is no way accommodated for the promotion of holineſs and virtue; but is rather a perfect diſcharge from all duty, and a *charta* of licentiouſneſs. For among other miſrepreſentations of the Goſpel, this is one, (and I think the moſt pernicious one that the ſophiſtry of Hell could ever ſuggeſt) that it requires nothing

nothing to be done by its proſelytes. A notion ſo ridiculous and miſchievous, as is fit for none but a profane epicure to embrace; who may be allow'd to make his religion as idle and ſedentary, as he does his God. Nay, 'tis not only ridiculous and miſchievous, but in the higheſt meaſure antichriſtian. For what greater antichriſtianiſm can there be than that, which ſtrikes not only at ſome of the main branches, but at the very root of chriſtianity; and at once, evacuates the entire purpoſe and aim of the Goſpel?

4. But to ſet this mark upon the right forehead; there are three ſorts of men that come in ſome meaſure or other under this charge. The firſt are the *Antinomians*, who are impudent and ignorant enough in expreſs terms to aſſert, that the ſacrifice and ſatisfaction of Chriſt does wholly excuſe us from all manner of duty and obedience; as if we libertines of the Goſpel were ſo far from being bound to *work out our ſalvation with fear and trembling*, that we are not to work at all; and as if the deſign of Chriſt's coming, were only to ſatisfie for the tranſgreſſions committed againſt the old covenant; and not at all to introduce a new one; and to diſcharge us from the obligation of the moral, as well as ceremonial law.

5. Nay, ſome there are among them that carry the buſineſs yet higher, and exclude not only the repentance and good works of men, but even the mediation of Chriſt himſelf, at leaſt the neceſſity of it, by ſuppoſing an anticipating juſtification or pardon from all eternity; which they found upon the ſecret decree and counſel of God.

6. The next that have a ſhare in the forementioned charge, are thoſe who make chriſtianity a matter of bare ſpeculation; and think all religion abſolv'd

abſolv'd in orthodoxy of opinion; that care not how men live, but only how they teach; and are ſo over-intent upon the Creed, that they neglect the Commandments. Little conſidering, that opinion is purely in order to practice; and that orthodoxy of judgment is neceſſary only in ſuch matters, where a miſtake would be of dangerous influence to our actions, that is, in fundamentals: So that the neceſſity of thinking rightly, is derived from the neceſſity of doing rightly; and conſequently, the latter is the more neceſſary of the two.

7. I am as ready to grant, as the moſt zealous ſtickler for orthodoxy can deſire, that our underſtandings are under obligation in divine matters; but withal, I think it abſurd that the obligation ſhould terminate there; ſince then 'twould follow; Firſt, That all theological ſcience were merely ſpeculative; Secondly, That we are bound to exact orthodoxy in all ſpeculations, (there being then no reaſon why in one, and not in another.) And thirdly, (which is the greateſt abſurdity of all) that we are obliged and tied up to no purpoſe; becauſe nothing is effected by it. Whenever therefore we are obliged to ſoundneſs of judgment, 'tis purely in order to the regulation of our practice; and conſequently, ſolitary orthodoxy does not ſatisfie its own end, much leſs that of chriſtianity. For to what purpoſe ſerves the direction of the compaſs, if there be neither wind nor ſail to carry on the veſſel to the haven?

8. But there are yet another ſort of men, who are juſtly chargeable with expunging all duty from the chriſtian inſtitution; I mean the *Solifidians*, who under a pretence of advancing the merits of the croſs, and the freeneſs of the divine grace, re-

quire

quire nothing of a chriſtian in order to his juſtification and acceptance before God, but firmly to rely on the ſatisfaction and merits of Chriſt; and without any more ado, to apply all to himſelf. And herein they do not only contradict the general deſign and particular expreſſes of the Goſpel, but treſpaſs againſt all Logick and common ſenſe. They contradict the Goſpel, in requiring nothing but faith, whereas that (as we ſhall ſee anon) equally requires obedience. And they contradict common ſenſe in requiring ſuch a faith. For they put the concluſion before the premiſſes, and make that the firſt act of faith, which ſuppoſes others; and in due order ought to be the laſt. And beſides, they make that act of faith contribute inſtrumentally towards the effecting of juſtification, which in order of nature is conſequent to it, and ſuppoſes it already effected. For I muſt be firſt juſtified, before I can rightly believe that I am ſo, otherwiſe I ſhall believe a falſe propoſition; ſince (as the moſt elementary Logician well knows) the certitude of the ſubject does not make, but ſuppoſe that of the object.

9. But I could diſpenſe with the unphiloſophicalneſs of this their hypotheſis, were it not withal unchriſtian, and utterly deſtructive of all piety and virtue. The great miſchief is, they unty the cords of duty, and exclude the neceſſity of obedience as really and effectually, tho' not ſo formally and expreſly, as the *Antinomians* do. For they require nothing but faith to qualifie a man for pardon; and tho' afterwards for modeſty's ſake, they come in halting with good works, yet 'tis at ſuch a time, when they might as well have left them out. 'Tis when the grand buſineſs (for which alone they could be neceſſary) is over; when the man in num-

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bred among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints. And to ſay here, that good works are neceſſary to ſalvation, tho' not to juſtification, is a myſtery above my conception; or rather, an abſurdity below my farther notice. Nor will it ſalve the matter to ſay, that they are neceſſary to declare our juſtification before men, or to aſcertain it to our ſelves, and the like; for alas, what does ſuch a neceſſity amount to? No more than this, that they are neceſſary for ſuch ends which themſelves are not neceſſary. And beſides, how can they declare or aſcertain our juſtification, when they are not the conditions of it? So that 'tis plain both from the lateneſs of the time when, and from the incompetency of the grounds for which they inſert good works, that they put them merely out of complaiſance; not becauſe they think them neceſſary, but becauſe they are aſhamed to declare expreſly, that they are not. Which appears yet farther, from the nature of thoſe works they are at length pleaſed to inſert. They are ſuch (for there is nothing that theſe men are ſo much afraid of as meriting) as are much ſhort of that ſincerity and perfection which is required by the Goſpel. For 'tis notorious, that they ſet the ſtate of regeneration ſo low, that 'tis conſiſtent with the dominion and prevalency of ſin. A bare reluctancy of the ſpirit (tho' foil'd in the conflict) againſt the fleſh, is eſteemed a ſufficient mark of a regenerate perſon; and this every ſinner that has the leaſt remains of conſcience, the leaſt twilight of natural light left him, muſt needs have, for no man loves ſin for it ſelf; nay, he hates it as 'tis in its ſelf abſolutely an evil, only he chuſes and wills it comparatively to avoid (as he then thinks) a greater evil.

10. Thus

10. Thus as the Jewiſh Doctors did the law, *Mat.* xv. 6. do theſe men make the Goſpel, of none effect by their traditions; and would queſtionleſs, were our Lord now on earth, deſerve to have a ſeverer woe pronounced againſt them, as perverters of a more excellent, a more perfect inſtitution. Strange! that man ſhould corrupt and ridicule ſo admirable a diſpenſation, and turn ſo great a grace of God into wantonneſs! That there ſhould be ſome συγκρίσεις in the Goſpel, which unlearned and unſtable men might wreſt to their own deſtruction, is no very hard matter to imagine; but that men ſhould at once pervert the whole ſcope and deſign of it, is prodigious, as well as antichriſtian, a myſtery of wonder as well as of iniquity. And have theſe men the face to declaim againſt the Papiſts for leaving out one of the commandments, when as they draw a black ſtroke over the whole table? Nay farther, have they the face to call themſelves chriſtians, and that of the purer ſort too, who thus evacuate the myſtery of godlineſs? By the ſame figure of ſpeech might the Heathen Emperors aſſume that ſacred name, when they endeavoured to perſecute it out of the world. Nay, much more plauſibly, for they only lopt off the branches, but theſe ſtrike at the very root of chriſtianity; they applied their forces againſt the profeſſors of the chriſtian religion, theſe againſt the religion it ſelf; and (what aggravates the malice) not as open enemies, but as treacherous friends, under the demure pretence of purity, orthodoxy, and Saintſhip. They cancel the law of Chriſt, and at the ſame time pretend to advance his Kingdom, call him Maſter, kiſs and betray him. And how can it now be expected, that theſe men ſhould be more forward than they are,

are, to yield obedience to the King, who have found out an expedient to ſlip their necks out of Chriſt's yoke, and have made the Goſpel in a worſe ſenſe, a dead letter than the law?

11. But certainly the gate that leads to Heaven is much ſtraiter than theſe men are pleaſed to make it, otherwiſe there would be no need of ſtriving to enter in at it, *Luke* xiii. 24. There are things to be done, as well as to be believed and underſtood under the evangelical diſpenſation, and chriſtianity is a ſervice as well as a profeſſion. To the clearing and eſtabliſhing of which propoſition, I ſhall conſider the Goſpel under a double capacity, firſt, as a law, and ſecondly, as a covenant. And firſt, as a law. 'Tis moſt certain that Chriſt was a lawgiver as well as *Moſes*, only as he was an introducer of a better hope, *Heb.* vii. 19. ſo he required better and ſublimer ſervices. The advantage of chriſtianity, does not conſiſt in having any abatements of duty; for Chriſt was ſo far from diminiſhing or retrenching the moral law, (for 'tis of that I ſpeak) that he improved every part of it to higher ſenſes than the moſt exquiſite of the Jewiſh Doctors underſtood, or at leaſt, conceiv'd themſelves oblig'd to; as is evident from his divine ſermon on the mount, which for the perfection and ſublimity of its precepts, may be ſaid rather to eclipſe all philoſophy, than to be the top and height of it.

12. But to prevent a miſtake which men are apt to run into upon this occaſion, I think fit here to interpoſe this caution, that when I ſpeak of Chriſt's improving the moral law, I do not mean that he made any improvement of natural religion (with which the moral law ought not to be confounded) any otherwiſe than by ſetting its precepts in a clearer

clearer light, and by inforcing them by ſtronger motives, but not by adding any new precepts of morality to it, or by raiſing its precepts to higher degrees of perfection. For natural religion, as I underſtand it, is in the reality of the thing no other than right reaſon; or if you will more explicitly and diſtinctly, a ſyſtem of ſuch moral and immutable truths, as the reaſon of man, if duly uſed, muſt needs diſcern to be truly perfective of his nature, and finally conducive to his happineſs. But now this ſeems to be commenſurate to the whole duty of man, and adequate to the full compaſs and extent of morality, and conſequently not to be capable of any addition or improvement. Indeed the Moſaick religion (meaning that part of it which was moral) being only a ſecondary tranſcript or extract of this natural religion, may be allow'd to have receiv'd an improvement in the precepts of it by Chriſt; partly by his adding new precepts to it, that is, ſuch as the letter of the law did not expreſly contain, and partly by his raiſing the old to a higher ſenſe. But as to natural religion it ſelf, the original of this tranſcript, I do not ſee how that can admit of any ſuch improvement. Since if what we ſuppoſe added to it be not according to right reaſon, then it cannot be any ways better'd or improv'd by ſuch an addition: But if it be according to right reaſon, then there is nothing added but what was ſuppoſed to be contain'd in it before. And ſo again there will be no improvement. The religion therefore which our Saviour Chriſt improved, was not, as I conceive natural religion, or the law of nature, but the moral law as deliver'd by *Moſes*, which he improv'd, by bringing it nearer, and making it more conformable to

the law of nature, as the true ſtandard and meaſure of its perfections.

13. And that he thus improv'd the law of *Moſes*, beſides the evidence of compariſon, we have his own expreſs word for it, Mat. v. 17. *I come not to deſtroy the law*, but to perfect, compleat, or fill it up. For ſo the word (Πληρῶσαι,) properly ſignifies. The Σκιαγραφία, or rude draught, was *Moſes* his part; but the ζωγράφησις τελεία, or the painting to the life, was Chriſt's. *Moſes* drew out the main lineaments, the Skeleton of the picture, but 'twas Chriſt that fill'd up all its intervals and vacuities, and gave it all its graces, air, and life-touches. And this is no more than what the analogy of the chriſtian diſpenſation required. The great end and deſign of God incarnate was, to perfect holineſs as well as to retrieve happineſs, to advance the intereſts of the divine life, and make us *partakers of the divine nature*, 2 *Pet.* i. 4. *Heb.* i. 3. and accordingly as he himſelf was the expreſs image of his Father's perſon, ſo 'twas requiſite he ſhould conſign to us an expreſs image, or correct copy of his Father's Will. He was to make us better men, and accordingly, 'twas fit he ſhould give us a better law; a law that could not be ſatisfied, but by ſuch a righteouſneſs, as ſhould exceed even the ſtricteſt among the *Jews*, that of the *Phariſees*. So that we are by no means releaſed, but rather more deeply engaged in duty by the Goſpel, as 'tis a law.

14. Nor ſecondly, are we releaſed by it, as 'tis a covenant. Here indeed begin the abatements of the Goſpel, not as to duty and obligation, for the Goſpel makes all that our duty which the law did, and more; only (which in ſhort is the true difference between the two covenants) it does not make the

the ſtrict and exact performance of it the meaſure, the ultimate meaſure whereby we are to ſtand or fall; but admits of pardon, which the law knew nothing of. Not of abſolute pardon, for then the Goſpel would be a covenant without a condition; nor of pardon without repentance, and actual reformation of manners; for then the Goſpel as a covenant, would interfere with its ſelf as a law, but upon the ſole conditions of faith and repentance. For 'tis a great miſtake to think that we are actually juſtified or pardoned by the ſatisfaction of Chriſt; this wou'd be the moſt ready expedient to verifie the falſe charge of the Scribes and Phariſees, and make him in their ſenſe a friend to publicans and ſinners; to encourage all manner of vice and immorality, and to turn the *myſtery of godlineſs*, into a *myſtery of iniquity*. No, Chriſt in this ſenſe has redeemed no man. All that he either did, or could in wiſdom do for us as ſatisfying, was in ſhort, to inſtate us in a capacity and poſſibility of pardon and reconciliation, by procuring a grant from his Father, that faith and repentance ſhould now be available to juſtification; which without his ſatisfaction, would not have been accepted to that purpoſe. Whereby it appears, that he was ſo far from ſuperſeding the neceſſity of repentance and good works, that he deſigned only to make way for the ſucceſs of them; he did ſo much, that repentance might not be in vain; and he did no more, that it might not be needleſs. And thus does the wiſdom, as well as the goodneſs of God, lead us to repentance, by ſo ordering the matter, that we may obtain pardon with it, and not without it; which are the two ſtrongeſt engagements to action in any concern, that our reaſon either demands, or our deliberation can ſuggeſt.

15. This I conceive to be the true hypotheſis and ſtate of chriſtianity, which I might yet farther confirm, by infinite authorities from ſcripture; which every where preſſes the neceſſity of good works, as conditions to our juſtification and acceptance before God: But I think the more rational and unprejudiced part of the world, are pretty well ſatisfied in that point, and know how to accommodate St. *James* and St. *Paul*, better than ſome late reconcilers. And beſides, the wiſdom of the hypotheſis ſufficiently approves it ſelf; 'tis ſuch, as becomes the perfections of the divine nature to exhibit to the world, and which the Angels may well deſire to look into, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. For 'tis at once, fitted to the neceſſities of man, and to the honour of God, to the infirmities of the animal life, and to the advancement of the divine, to the relief of the ſinner, and to the ſuppreſſion of ſin. Here *Mercy and truth meet together, righteouſneſs and peace kiſs each other.* The ſacrifice of the altar, does not prejudice the balance of the ſanctuary; and the divine juſtice is ſo ſatisfy'd, that the neceſſity of holineſs and obedience remains ſecured. Much is forgiven, and much is to be done; duty continues as faſt as ever, and even the law of liberty is a ſervice.

16. And now that this may not be thought a hard ſaying, and make ſome of Jeſus his diſciples to go back, (as once they did) and walk no more with him when they hear of duty, and ſomething to be done; I ſhall now proceed to demonſtrate the reaſonableneſs of that ſervice which chriſtianity requires of us; which was the ſecond general propoſition I purpoſed to ſpeak to.

17. Religion is ſo very agreeable, both to the inclinations and diſcourſings of human nature, that as

as none is capable of being religious but a rational creature, ſo 'tis almoſt impoſſible for a creature to be endued with reaſon, and not to be religious. Hence 'tis, that there is no Nation ſo barbarous and degenerate, but what has ſome religion or other; and tho' ignorant of the true object as well as manner of worſhip, yet rather than wholly abſtain from religious applications, will adore implicitly, and erect an altar, Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *to the unknown God.*

18. Nay, ſo great a congruity is there between religion, and the radical notices and ſentiments of a human ſoul, that all mankind, except only ſome few diſtorted and anomalous heads (for there are monſtroſities in the Soul as well as the body) are unanimouſly agreed upon the fundamental and ſubſtantial maxims of it; which for their correſpondency to our rational natures, are uſually diſtinguiſh'd by the name of natural religion. For there are practical as well as ſpeculative principles; and that he who does no hurt, is to receive none, is as evident a propoſition in morality, as that the whole is greater than its part, is in the Mathematicks; or, that nothing can be, and not be at once, is in the Metaphyſicks.

19. And as religion and natural religion, carry ſuch a ſtrict conformity to our rational faculties, ſo does revealed religion too. All the lines of this, as well as of the other, point all the way at, and at laſt concentre in the happineſs and welfare of mankind. 'Tis a purſuance of the ſame excellent end, only by more cloſe and direct means. For God in all his intercourſes with us, does accommodate himſelf to our natures; and as he will not forcibly determine us to good, becauſe he has made us free; ſo neither does he require any thing

from us, but what is good, and conſiſtent with reaſon, becauſe he has made us rational. And altho' we cannot by this *Candle of the Lord*, Prov. xx. 27. find out ſome of the great and wonderful things of his law (for herein conſiſts the formal difference between natural and reveal'd religion) yet when they are once propoſed to us, they are highly approved by our intellectual reliſh, and ſtrike perfect uniſons to the voice of our reaſon; ſo that even he that tranſgreſſes the law (for 'tis of him the Apoſtle there ſpeaks) *conſents to the law that it is good*, Rom. vii. 16.

20. And indeed, were it not ſo, it would be as unfit for God to propoſe, as hard for man to receive; ſince even the prudence of a nation, is by no one thing either more juſtified or condemned, than by the good or ill contrivance of its laws. *Shall not* then the Law-giver of the whole world enact that which is right, *Gen.* xviii. 25. as well as *the judge of all the earth do right?* Shall he not be as wiſe in the framing of his law, as he is juſt in the execution of it? God in contriving the mechaniſm of the material world, diſplay'd the excellency of his divine Geometry, and made all things in number, weight and meaſure. *He eſtabliſhed the world by his wiſdom, and ſtretched out the heavens by his diſcretion*, Jer. x. 12. And ſhall he not govern the intellectual world, with as much wiſdom as he made the natural one? Queſtionleſs he does; and the law which he has preſcribed to us, is as perfect and excellent, as that whereby he wrought the beauty and order of the univerſe. *For the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*, Pſal. cxlv. He has accommodated his ſtatutes and judgments, both to the infinite perfection of his own nature, and to the actual perfection and capacity

pacity of ours. *God is a Spirit*, and accordingly (as the Apoſtle tells us) *the law is ſpiritual*, Rom. vii. 14. Man is rational; and accordingly, the homage he is to pay him that made him ſo, is no other than a reaſonable ſervice.

21. But to be as compendious, and withal as juſt and diſtinct as may be in ſo copious and plentiful a ſubject; I conſider, that as the whole rational nature of man conſiſts of two faculties, underſtanding and will, (whether really or notionally diſtinct, I ſhall not now diſpute) ſo chriſtianity, whoſe end is to perfect the whole man, and give the laſt accompliſhment both to our intellectual and moral powers, will be wholly abſolved in theſe two parts, things to be believed, and things to be done. If therefore in both theſe, it can acquit it ſelf at the bar of reaſon, the concluſion is evident, that it is a reaſonable ſervice.

22. Firſt then, as to the things which are to be believed. Now theſe are either the authority and truth of the whole chriſtian inſtitution, or the truth of particular myſteries contained in it. The firſt of theſe will appear to be a reaſonable object of faith two ways; firſt, from the nature of its deſign, and its excellent aptneſs to compaſs it; and ſecondly, from extrinſick arguments, and collateral circumſtances. And firſt, 'tis recommended to us by the nature of its deſign, and its excellent aptneſs to compaſs it. It is (according to the precedent repreſentation) a very wiſe and rational hypotheſis, above the reaſon of man indeed, at firſt to contrive; but ſuch as when propoſed, it muſt needs approve and acquieſce in, as at once the power and wiſdom of God, 1 *Cor.* i. 24 becauſe (as I firſt obſerved, and ſhall hereafter more plainly demonſtrate) 'tis ſo

admirably fitted to the honour of God, and to the neceſſities of man; thereby verifying that double part of the angelical anthem at the appearance of its divine Author, and at once bringing *Glory to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men*, Luk.ii.14.

23. And as it appears thus rational in its general idea or ſtructure, and thereby ſpeaks its ſelf worthy of God; ſo ſecondly, that it came actually from him no rational perſon can doubt, that conſiders that conjugation of arguments, that cloud of witneſſes, whereby its divine original ſtands atteſted. Such as are the variety of propheſies and prefigurations, their punctual and exact accompliſhment in the Author of this Inſtitution, his birth, life, miracles, and doctrine, his paſſion, death, reſurrection, and aſcenſion; with all the wonderful arrear and train of accidents that enſued for the confirmation of Chriſtianity; ſuch as the wonderful ſuſtentation, protection, increaſe, and continuation of Chriſt's little flock, the chriſtian church; the miraculous aſſiſtances, and miraculous actions of the Apoſtles; the harmony of the Evangeliſts; the conſtancy and courage of his firſt witneſſes and martyrs; the defeat of the infernal powers in the ſilencing of oracles; the juſt puniſhment that lighted upon his enemies; and laſtly, the completion of all propheſies that proceeded out of his divine mouth while on earth; which I ſhall here only point at in general, and leave to the inlargement of every man's private meditation.

24. Then as for the particular myſteries contained in chriſtianity, I know but of three that threaten any diſturbance to our philoſophy; and thoſe are the three catholick ones, the trinity, the hypoſtatick union, and the reſurrection. Now concerning the two firſt, I obſerve, that they are indeed above the adequate

adequate comprehenſion of our reaſon; but not contrary or repugnant to it. For as we cannot conceive how theſe things can be, ſo neither do we poſitively and clearly perceive that they cannot be, as we do in contradictions and things contrary to reaſon. But as to the laſt, I don't in the leaſt underſtand why it ſhould be thought a thing incredible that God (whoſe very notion involves omnipotence) ſhould raiſe the dead, *Acts* xxvi .8. 'Tis true, we may be as ignorant how this can be, as in either of the former articles; but that it abſolutely may be, there is much plainer evidence; eſpecially to thoſe who think it reaſonable to believe a creation. Which if taken according to ſtrictneſs of notion, for a production of ſomething out of nothing, is moſt confeſſedly a greater and more difficult performance (as to the nature of the work) than the raiſing of the dead can be. Or if more largely, for producing ſomething out of præexiſtent, but naturally unapt matter, yet 'tis ſtill at leaſt equal with it. He that with the bare energy of his omnipotent word, could inſpirit the dead, ſtupid, void and formleſs maſs, and make it move into a frame ſo elegant and harmonious, that the mere contemplation of its beauty and order, has by many philoſophers been thought a ſufficient entertainment of life, may eaſily be preſumed to be able to do the ſame in the leſſer world; and with effect to ſay to a rude and diſorder'd heap of duſt, the chaos of a humane body, ſtand up and live.

25. But after all, were this article of the reſurrection much more thick-ſet with difficulties than it is, yet would we, before we venture to determine againſt its poſſibility, ſit a while and conſider, that we are nonplus'd at a thouſand *phænomena's* in nature, which if they were not done we ſhould have

have thought them abſolutely impoſſible ; (as for inſtance, to go no farther, the central libration of the earth) and now they are, we cannot comprehend 'em ; that we have ſeen but a few of God's works, and underſtand yet fewer : And laſtly, that as the poſſibility of the effect is above the comprehenſion of our reaſon, ſo the power of the agent is much more ſo ; we ſhould diſcern great reaſon to be cautious how we ſet limits to the divine omnipotence ; and ſhould rather ſupport our faith againſt all objections, with that univerſal ſalvo of the Apoſtle, *I know whom I have believed*, 2 Tim. i. 12.

26. I deſcend now from the things that are to be believed, to the things that are to be done in the chriſtian religion. And that thoſe may appear to be a reaſonable ſervice, I conſider firſt in general that the chriſtian law is nothing elſe but the law of nature retrieved, explained, and ſet in a clearer light. Chriſt indeed, added ſome new precepts that were not in the law of *Moſes*, but not any that were not in the law of nature. That he only reſtored and reſcued from the ſophiſtications of ill principles, and the corruptions of degenerate manners. For the clearer underſtanding of which propoſition, 'tis to be obſerv'd, that the law of nature was twice retrieved, by *Moſes*, and by Chriſt. *Moſes* did it imperfectly, with a ſhaking hand, and with a rude pencil ; he adopted 'tis true, into his table, as many of natures laws as were neceſſary to the preſent ſtate and capacity of the jewiſh people ; but he did not exhauſt the whole code and digeſt of nature. For there are many inſtances and branches of the natural law, which are no way reducible to the Moſaic tables, unleſs hooked in by long tedious conſequences ; which not one of a thouſand is able to deduce them from it ; as appears in

in the inſtances of gratitude to benefactors, love to enemies, forgiveneſs of injuries, humility, and the like. Which are excellencies of the firſt magnitude in the imperial conſtitutions of nature, but not clearly tranſcribed in the copy and extract of *Moſes*, as too refined for the groſſneſs of that age; for the hardneſs of the jewiſh people, and for the infancy of that diſpenſation.

27. This therefore was reſerved for the work of a diviner prophet, who ſhould retrieve the law of nature to the full, and reſtore it as at the beginning. For he came (as he teſtifies of himſelf, *Mat.* v. 17. and as was before obſerved to another purpoſe) to fill up *Moſes* his law, which implies, that it was imperfect and deficient; and wherein ſhould its defectiveneſs conſiſt, but in wanting ſomething of the natural law? The chriſtian law therefore, is only the law of nature retrieved.

28. This being premiſed, 'tis but now to conſider what the formal notion of the law of nature is; and we have found out one general meaſure whereby to judge of the reaſonableneſs of the chriſtian law. Now by the law of nature, I ſuppoſe, we all underſtand certain practical maxims or dictates, the obſerving or tranſgreſſing of which, conſidering the preſent ſyſtem of the univerſe, have a natural connexion with the well or ill being of man, either as to his private or political capacity. I ſay, conſidering the preſent ſyſtem of the univerſe. For no queſtion, God might have ſo contrived the order and ſcheme of the creation, as that many of thoſe things which are now for the intereſt, might have been for the diſintereſt of mankind; as he might have ſo framed the texture of a humane body, that what is now wholeſome and ſovereign, might have been poiſonous and pernicious; and in this

this reſpect, I conceive the law of nature may be ſaid to depend upon the arbitrary will of God; and to be mutable at his pleaſure. But yet it ſtill remains immutably true in the general, that whatſoever has ſuch a natural ordination to, or connexion with the well or ill being of mankind, is good or evil reſpectively. This is the ſtandard of morality, and immorality; and the eſſential difference between virtue and vice. And 'tis as immutably true, that ſome particular inſtances ſhould have ſuch a natural connexion, *ſtante rerum hypotheſi*, during the preſent ſtate and order of things. Now whatever has ſo, is an eſſential branch of the law of nature; and obliges us to act, or not to act, reſpectively to the term of its ordination. So that *bonum honeſtum* is that which in the order of things, is *bonum utile*, and conduces as a natural medium to felicity; which is the end of man.

29. Hence then it follows, that the chriſtian law, which is nothing elſe but the law of nature retrieved, conſiſts only of ſuch practical maxims, which carry a natural relation to the true intereſt and well-being of mankind; and conſequently, contains nothing in it but what is reaſonable, very reaſonable to be done. But to evince this more particularly, 'twill be requiſite to take a curſory view of the chriſtian law. And this I ſhall conſider, firſt, as I find it ſumm'd up in general by our bleſſed Saviour, in anſwer to the lawyer's queſtion, what he ſhould do to inherit eternal life. And, ſecondly, in ſome of thoſe particular inſtances of it, which ſeem moſt to croſs the preſent intereſt of mankind.

30. As to the firſt, the ſum which our bleſſed Saviour gave of it was this: *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, and with*

with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thy ſelf, Matth. xxii. 37. Mark xii. 30. Luke x. 27. Theſe he told him, were the two great commandments; and that there were none greater than theſe: And certainly, none more reaſonable. For ſince man is not his own end, but has an amorous principle within him, which tranſports him to good without himſelf; ſince he is not a central and ſelf-terminating being, but by the weight of his affections gravitates and inclines to ſomething farther, what is more reaſonable than that he fix upon God as his centre, who is as well the end as the author of his being? And ſince whatever portion of his love is not directed thither, will neceſſarily light (for it cannot be idle, and muſt fix ſomewhere) upon diſproportionate and vain objects, which neither deſerve it nor can ſatisfie it, and conſequently will but vex and torment him; what can be more reaſonable than that he unite and concentre all the rays of his Affection, both intellectual and ſenſitive upon God; and according to the ſtricteſt ſenſe of this great commandment, love him with all his heart, ſoul and mind? viſion and love make up the full compoſition of our celeſtial happineſs hereafter; and they are the neareſt approach we can make to it here.

31. Nor is the ſecond great commandment leſs reaſonable than the firſt. The trueſt and moſt effectual way a man can take to love himſelf, is to love his neighbour as himſelf. For ſince man is a neceſſitous and indigent creature (of all creatures the moſt indigent) and ſince he cannot upon his own ſolitary ſtock, ſupply the neceſſities of his nature, (the want of ſociety being one of them) and ſince of all creatures here below, none is capable of doing him either ſo much good, or ſo much

much harm, as thoſe of his own ſpecies; as 'twill be his beſt ſecurity to have as many friends, and as few enemies as he can; ſo, as a means to this, to hate and injure none, but to love and oblige all, will be his beſt policy. So far is the ſtate of nature from being (according to the elements of the *Leviathan*) a ſtate of hoſtility and war, that there is no one thing that makes more apparently for the intereſt of mankind, than univerſal charity and benevolence. And indeed, would all men but once agree to eſpouſe one anothers intereſt, and proſecute the publick good truly and faithfully, nothing would be wanting to verifie and realize the dreams of the golden age, to anticipate the millennial happineſs, and bring down Heaven upon earth. Society would ſtand firm and compact, like a mathematical frame of architecture, ſupported by mutual dependencies and coherencies; and every man's kindneſſes would return again upon himſelf, in the circle and reciprocation of love.

32. But beſides this conſideration of intereſt, there is another which equally contributes to recommend this law of univerſal benevolence; and prehaps with more ſweetneſs of inſinuation than the former, and that is pleaſure. Theſe two are put together by the pſalmiſt, who tells us, *that 'tis both good and pleaſant for brethren to dwell together in unity*, Pſal. cxxxiii. 1. There is certainly, a moſt divine pleaſure in the acts and expreſſes of benevolence; ſo that if God may be ſaid to take pleaſure in any one thing, beſides the richneſs of his own infinity, it muſt be in the communication of it. Sure I am, no man can do good to another, without recreating and feaſting his own ſpirit; nay, even the moſt happy and ſelf-ſufficient man, who as to his intereſt, has the leaſt need to be kind

and

and obliging, yet as to his pleaſure, has the greateſt. For he enjoys his happy ſtate moſt, when he communicates it, and takes a partner with him into his paradiſe, and receives a more vigorous joy from the reflection, than from the direct incidency of his happineſs.

33. I might here take occaſion to ſhew, the reaſonableneſs of juſtice and honeſty; with other particular brances of this great law: But the neceſſity of theſe is ſo notorious (no ſociety being able to ſubſiſt without them) and withall ſo atteſted by the common vote and experience of the world (it being the buſineſs of all human laws, and the end of all civil government, to engage men to the obſervance of them) that I ſhall not need to make any plea in their behalf. Inſtead therefore of lending any farther light to what ſhines already ſo conſpicuouſly by its own, I ſhall now proceed to juſtify the chriſtian law in ſome of thoſe inſtances which ſeem moſt to croſs the preſent intereſt of mankind.

34. There are ſome precepts of the chriſtian law which ſeem directly, and in their whole kind, to be againſt the Intereſt of Man. (For as for thoſe which may accidentally and in ſome junctures of circumſtances, I ſhall conſider them afterwards.) Now theſe I ſhall derive from that abſtract of chriſtian philoſophy, the divine ſermon on the mount. The firſt inſtance ſhall be in the precept of meekneſs, which our divine law giver has extended ſo far as τῷ πονηρῷ μὴ ἀντιςῆναι, that we reſiſt not evil, *Mat* v. 39. which is not to be underſtood in prejudice either of the civil ſword, or of legal proſecutions for the reparation of injuries (for this would be to give the worſt of men a continual advantage againſt the beſt) nor of publick wars between diſtinct kingdoms (for they being

ing under no common juriſdiction, have no other expedient whereby to right themſelves when injur'd) but only as to private perſons, who by virtue of this precept are not permitted (unleſs in apparent danger of life; for then the law of ſelf-preſervation takes place, the benefit of other laws being not at hand; I ſay, are not permitted) to retaliate evil, but obliged rather with their divine maſter, to *give their backs to the ſmiters, and their cheeks to them that pluckt off the hair*, Iſa. l. 6.

35. Now this may ſeem a very diſadvantagious and inconvenient command, in as much as it may be ſaid by tying up our hands, to expoſe us to all manner of contumelies and affronts, and invite the ill treatments of rude and diſingenuous ſpirits. But whoever ſeriouſly conſiders the matter will find, that pure and ſimple revenge is a thing very abſurd, and very productive of ill conſequences; and in ſome reſpects, worſe than the firſt injury. For that may have ſome ends of profit and advantage in it; but to do another man a diskindneſs merely becauſe he has done me one, ſerves to no good purpoſe, and to many ill ones. For it contributes nothing to the reparation of the firſt injury (it being impoſſible that the act of any wrong ſhould be reſcinded, tho' the permanent effect may) but inſtead of making up the breach of my happineſs, it increaſes the objects of my pity, by bringing in a new miſery into the world more than was before, and occaſions freſh returns of malice, one begetting another like the encirclings of diſturb'd water, till the evil becomes fruitful, and multiplies into a long ſucceſſion, a genealogy of miſchiefs. And by this time, I think the man has reaſon to repent him of his revenge; and to be convinced of the equity of the law which forbids it.

36. The

36. The next inſtance I ſhall mention, is that of loving enemies. This runs higher than the former, that being only negative, not to return evil; but this poſitive, to do good. A ſtrange precept one would think, and highly contradictory to reaſon as well as nature. But whoever conſiders the great uſefulneſs of love and benevolence to the intereſt of Society, will quickly perceive, that he ought not to be diſingaged from the obſervance of ſo neceſſary a duty, upon ſo ſlight a ground as another's default in it. I grant, 'tis neither reaſonable, nor poſſible, to love an enemy for being ſo, (that is no proper motive of love) but yet 'tis very reaſonable to love the man notwithſtanding his enmity. Becauſe the neceſſity of charity is ſo indiſpenſable, that it ought to oblige in all caſes. And beſides, as by this means all enmity is certainly prevented on one ſide (which is of very great conſideration to the publick peace) ſo is it the likelieſt method to bring over the other. Kindneſſes will at length prevail upon him, who is proof againſt all the ſenſe of duty and conſcience, and the coals of fire which are heaped upon his head (when nothing elſe will do it) will melt him down into love and ſweetneſs.

37. There is one inſtance more, wherein the chriſtian law ſeems not to conſult the intereſt of humane life, and that is in the matter of divorce; which our Saviour allows in no caſe but that of adultery. Now this alſo ſeems to be one of the hard ſayings. For the natural propenſion to procreation is not to be ſatisfied out of marriage, and marriage by this appendage ſeems to be ſuch a burthen that the diſciples might well ſay, *if the caſe of man be ſo with his wife, it is not good to marry*, Matth. xix. 10. But yet upon conſideration, this

alſo will appear to be a very reaſonable confinement. For firſt, all the ſuppoſable inconveniencies of this reſtraint may be in a great meaſure prevented by prudent and wiſe choice. But ſuppoſe they cannot, yet, ſecondly, as 'twould be moſt adviſable for ſome men to marry, though with this reſtraint, ſo is marriage with this reſtraint better for ſociety than without it. For were there liberty of divorce upon other grounds, every petty diſlike would never want a pretence for a diſſolution; and then the ſame inconveniencies would enſue, as if there were no ſuch thing as the matrimonial inſtitution; ſuch as diminution of affection to children, neglect of their education, and the like; beſides the perpetual quarrels and animoſities between the parties themſelves ſo divided, and their reſpective relatives, all which would bring more inconveniencies upon ſociety, than thoſe which are pretended to be avoided by diſtending and enlarging the licence of divorce.

38. Now if to this apology for the reaſonableneſs of chriſtianity, taken from its conduciveneſs and natural tendency to the intereſt of humane life, we farther add, the dominion and right that God has over us, the great benefits wherewith he has already prevented us, and the exceeding weight of glory laid up in reverſion for us; and would we farther conſider, that holineſs has a natural ordination to the happineſs of Heaven as well as of earth, that 'tis among the τὰ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, the things that accompany, or are eſſentially retaining to Salvation; ſo that would God in mercy diſpenſe with it as a conditionary, yet we could not be happy without it, as a natural qualification for Heaven. Farther yet, would we conſider the great eaſineſs as well as manifold advantage of chriſtianity,

chriſtianity, that many inſtances of duty are agreeable to the inclinations of nature; and that where there is a law in our members that runs counter to that of the mind, we have the aids and aſſiſtances of grace; that God has requir'd nothing of us but what is ſubſtantially within the verge and compaſs of humane nature; for to believe, repent and love, are all natural acts; we believe ſome ſtories, we repent of ſome follies, we love ſome men; and God obliges us but to believe him, to repent of follies againſt him, and to love him. The acts are the ſame for their ſubſtance, though not in their determination. Laſtly, would we conſider how much all this is confirm'd by the argument of practice and experience; that the Devil has more apoſtates than Chriſt; that the number of thoſe who leave ſin, and come over to virtue, is much greater than of thoſe that leave virtue, and come over to ſin, the concluſion would be placed beyond the reach of controverſy. That chriſtianity is a reaſonable ſervice, and that the precepts of our excellent lawgiver both begin, continue and end with a beatitude.

39. I can now foreſee but one objection of any moment, which the argument of this diſcourſe is liable to; which is, that although virtue and vice have a natural ordination to the happineſs and miſery of life reſpectively, yet it may ſo happen by the intervening of ſome accidents, that this connexion of things may be broken off; and that a man may be a loſer by virtue, and a gainer by vice, as in the inſtances of martyrdom and ſecure theft. And here the queſtion will be, whether it be then reaſonable to act virtuouſly, and unreaſonable to do the contrary. To this I anſwer, firſt, that it may be juſtly queſtion'd (notwithſtanding

the intervention of any accidents) whether a man may be virtuous to his diſadvantage, or vicious to his advantage, even as to this preſent ſtate, conſidering the internal ſatisfaction and acquieſcence, or diſſatisfaction and moleſtation of ſpirit that attend the practice of virtue and vice reſpectively. But ſuppoſing he may; then ſecondly, I reply, that here come in the rewards and puniſhments of another life, to ſupply the natural ſanction of the law. Then thirdly, to the ſecond inſtance I offer this in peculiar, that altho' in ſome circumſtances I might be diſhoneſt to my preſent gain, yet 'tis very reaſonable, that all ſhould be obliged to the law of juſtice. Becauſe if every one ſhould be permitted to uſe ſecret frauds (and all may as well as one) the evil would come about again, even to him whom we juſt now ſuppoſed a gainer by his theft: And as to the publick, 'twould be all one as if there were no property; and then for want of encouragement and ſecurity, the final iſſue of the matter would be, an utter neglect and diſimprovement of the earth, and a continual diſturbance of the publick peace. So that when all's done, Honeſty is the beſt Policy; and to live moſt happily is to live moſt virtuouſly and religiouſly. So true is that of the Pſalmiſt, *I ſee that all things come to an end, but thy commandment is exceeding broad*, Pſal. cxix.

40. From what has been hitherto diſcourſed, I ſhall now briefly deduce ſome practical inferences, and conclude. Since then our religion is ſo reaſonable a ſervice, 'twill follow hence in the firſt place, that there may be a due exerciſe and uſe of reaſon in divine matters; and that whatſoever is apparently contrary to reaſon, ought not be obtruded as of divine authority, nor be accounted as

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any part of the chriſtian religion. An inference wherein the faith of the Church of *Rome* is not a little concern'd.

41. 'Twill follow ſecondly, that no man ought to be perſecuted, or have any external violence done him for his religion, ſuppoſing that by overt acts, he give no diſturbance to the publick. For ſince God has required nothing of us but what is agreeable to our reaſon, why ſhould man ?

42. 'Twill follow thirdly, that ſin is the very height and extremity of folly and diſingenuity. Of folly, becauſe it croſſes and defeats the excellent end of man, which is to live happily and commodiouſly. And of diſingenuity, becauſe 'tis commited againſt him, who when he might by virtue of his ſupreme dominion have impoſed upon us arbitrary laws (as that given to *Adam*) or hard and ſevere ones (as that to *Abraham*) has been graciouſly pleaſed to make nothing the condition of our happineſs, but what upon other accounts would have been moſt adviſable to be done. This certainly will render ſin exceeding ſinful, and leave the ſinner without the leaſt ſhadow of an excuſe. We commonly derive the aggravations of ſin from the greatneſs of God; but without queſtion, his goodneſs will ſupply us with as many; and in this ſenſe alſo 'twill be true to ſay, *As is his majeſty, ſo is his mercy.*

43. Laſtly, hence 'twill follow, that we ought to perform this rational will of God with angelical alacrity and conſtancy, partly for its own excellency, as 'tis a purſuance of our intereſt, and partly out of gratitude and generoſity to God, for giving us ſuch excellent laws; in keeping of which there is ſo great reward. For not only the end of our religion is happineſs, but even her very *ways*

are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace. *Quintilian* enquiring why former ages afforded better Orators than the latter, reſolves the problem into this; becauſe there were then greater encouragements and rewards. And if greater encouragements will make good Orators, why ſhould they not make good men? Let us then make it our daily endeavour, as we do our daily prayer, that this excellent will of God may be done here on *Earth, as it is in Heaven*; and the more we do ſo, the more we ſhall ſtill be convinc'd that it is our reaſonable ſervice.

A DISCOURSE *concerning Perſeverance in Holineſs.*

1. ALL that is of any moment for the full diſcharging of this ſubject, will be abſolved in theſe three conſiderations. Firſt, that man has one way or other ſufficient power to perſevere in a courſe of holineſs if he will, otherwiſe all exhortations would be in vain. Secondly, that 'tis alſo poſſible for him to fall from a ſtate of holineſs; otherwiſe they would all be ſuperfluous. And laſtly, by ſhewing him what vaſt encouragements, what infinite engagements he has to ſtand.

2. I begin with the firſt, that man has one way or other ſufficient power to perſevere in a courſe of holineſs if he will. Where by perſeverance, I do not underſtand a continuedly uniform, equal courſe of

of obedience, and ſuch as is not interrupted with the leaſt act of ſin, (for this is a perfection not to be hoped for, under the diſadvantages of mortality) but only ſuch a conſtancy of obedience as excludes all contrary habits; and likewiſe all ſuch acts of ſin as are ſaid directly to waſte the conſcience; thoſe I mean, which are committed againſt the clear and expreſs dictate, either of natural reaſon, or ſupernatural revelation. And withal (to compleat the character) ſuch an obedience as is attended with a ſedulous care and hearty endeavour to correct and ſubdue, even thoſe pitiable infirmities, which can never be wholly put off in this ſtate, but will always adhere like ſpots, to the brighteſt ſtar in the firmament. This I conceive, to be all one with the diſpoſition of ſoul, which with more compendiouſneſs we uſually call ſincerity, in oppoſition to a perfect and ſinleſs obedience. Now that man has ſufficient power to perſevere in ſuch a courſe of life as is here deſcribed, (not to call in the aſſiſtance of any other argument) ſeems to me evidently demonſtrable from this ſingle conſideration, that to be found in the ſtate above-mention'd is the condition of the new covenant, upon the fulfilling of which, all our hopes of pardon and ſalvation depend. I do not ſay 'tis the indiſpenſible condition of our ſalvation, that we perſevere uninterruptedly even in this ſtate of evangelical righteouſneſs (it being poſſible for a man after an interruption of a ſalvable ſtate, to recover into it again, as is plain from the caſe of *David*, St. *Peter*, and many others) but that we be found finally in this ſtate, is the condition of our ſalvation. *For if the righteous man turneth away from his righteouſneſs, and committeth iniquities and dies in them, the righteouſneſs that he hath done ſhall*

not be mentioned; in the ſin that he hath ſinned ſhall he dye. Well then, if ſalvation be not to be had out of this ſtate, then it follows, that it muſt never become impoſſible to a man without his own fault, to be found in it, ſince 'tis repugnant to the very nature of a covenant (much more of this great covenant of mercy) to have a condition annex'd to it; which in ſome circumſtances, and that without our fault, may prove impoſſible.

3. The condition then of this new covenant, muſt be as poſſible to man in this ſtate of degeneracy, now his *locks are ſhaven, and his great ſtrength is departed from him,* as the condition of the firſt covenant was to him in his primitive might and vigour. *Do this and live,* is equally common to both; the only difference (except only that in this corrupt ſtate of humane nature, the grace of God is become neceſſary to enable us to do what he ſhall accept) lies in this that is to be done, not in the poſſibility of the performance. Or if there are degrees of poſſibility, the advantage ought rather to lie on this ſide, this being (as was hinted before) a covenant of grace and mercy.

4. Well then, if to be found finally in the ſtate above deſcribed, be the indiſpenſible condition of our ſalvation; and if for that very reaſon (as it has been prov'd) it muſt not in any circumſtance become impoſſible without our fault, it unavoidably follows, that 'tis alſo poſſible to perſevere in it without interruption; becauſe otherwiſe, we having not the diſpoſal of our own lives, it will oftentimes prove impoſſible for us (and that without our own fault) to be found finally in that ſtate which is the condition of ſalvation; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. The ſhort is (to ſpeak all in a word) the poſſibility of being found in a ſal-

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vable ſtate cannot be ſufficiently ſecur'd, without a poſſibility of always perſevering in it; and therefore I conclude it poſſible for a man to do ſo; which was the thing I undertook to prove.

5. But now left man upon a ſurvey of his natural ſtrength, and of the auxiliaries of the divine grace, ſhould pronounce himſelf abſolutely impregnable, and ſhould begin to ſay in his heart (as the Pſalmiſt did in another caſe) *I ſhall never be removʼd, thou Lord of thy goodneſs haſt made my hill ſo ſtrong*: 'tis high time to turn the perſpective, and give him a more near, full, and diſtinct view of his condition, that inſtead of ſtretching himſelf upon the bed of ſecurity, he may learn to work out his ſalvation with fear and trembling. Which we ſhall do, by advancing to the ſecond thing propoſed, which is, that although man has ſufficient power to perſevere if he will, yet 'tis alſo poſſible for him to fall from a ſtate of holineſs. *Navigat enim adhuc*, for he is ſtill upon the waters; and tho' with the uſe of diligence and prudent conduct, he may decline both rocks and ſhallows, yet if he venture to ſleep within the veſſel which he ſhould govern, upon a groundleſs preſumption that an Angel will be his pilot, and that he ſhall be infallibly ſteer'd to the right point by the arm of Omnipotence, he may notwithſtanding the paſt ſucceſs of his voyage, and his confidence of the future, be ſhipwreck'd even within ſight of the haven.

6. I confeſs, when I conſider with what ſtrength and combination of argument, chriſtianity both as to faith and practice, does approve it ſelf to be the moſt rational thing in the world. When I conſider the nobleneſs of its original (God being its author) the excellency of its nature, (it being moſt agreeable to, and perfective of our beſt faculties) its

its wholeſome effects and operations, (the intereſts of Kingdoms and States as well as of private perſons depending upon it,) and laſtly, the greatneſs of its end, which is no leſs than everlaſting bliſs and happineſs: I ſay, when I conſider all this, I am ready to conclude it the moſt prodigious thing in nature, that ſo very few ſhould be in love with the Beauty of Holineſs, were I not immediately ſurpriſed with a greater miracle, which is, that many of thoſe few, after ſome conſiderable progreſs in virtue, retract their beſt choice; and after the good Angel has brought them within ſight of the mountain of ſafety, look back upon the region of wickedneſs.

7. This certainly is a condition no leſs ſtrange than deplorable, and calls for our wonder as well as our pity. 'Tis true indeed, ignorance of the ſweets of religion may ſomething leſſen the wonder of not embracing it, and the food of Angels may lie neglected on the ground ſo long, as men wiſt not what it is; but for thoſe who are once *enlightened, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God, and the power of the world to come*, one would think it as difficult for ſuch to fall away, as the Apoſtle aſſures us 'tis, to renew them again to repentance.

8. But ſuch is the imperfection and unſteadineſs of human nature, that from the beginning of things there have been inſtances of this kind. Paradiſe could not preſerve man in his innocence, and the garden of the Lord degenerated into a wilderneſs. Neither is this to be obſerv'd only in man, who ſits in the loweſt form of intellectual beings, but the very Angels alſo, who are greater in power and might, are charged with folly for leaving their

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own habitation, *Job.* iv. 18. Thoſe bright ſons of the morning could not long endure to be happy; but grew giddy with the ſublimity of their ſtation, and fell from the heights of glory. And altho' the bleſſed Inhabitants of that ſerene and peaceful manſion are now (as 'tis piouſly believed) fully confirmed in holineſs and happineſs, yet man, like this ſublunary region which falls to his lot to inherit, is ſtill nothing elſe but a ſcene of changes and revolutions; but in nothing ſo changeable, as in that wherein he ought to be moſt fix'd, the practice of virtue and religion. 'Tis a narrow and rugged path, and he that treads ſureſt is not ſecure from falling.

9. This will plainly appear to him that conſiders, that no habit, tho' contracted by ever ſo great a repetition of acts, does neceſſitate the faculty, but only diſpoſes it to act with greater facility; and conſequently, leaves it ſtill indifferent to oppoſite operations. Whence 'tis eaſie to conceive, that an habit of holineſs may by degrees, be aboliſh'd by contrary actions. For as this habit was at firſt begotten by frequent acts, ſo may it be deſtroyed by the oppoſite ones: and (what is more) a contrary habit may be at length produced.

10. This I ſay is very poſſible in the ordinary courſe of things; and that God ſhould interpoſe here with an irreſiſtible power to prevent it, we have no grounds from ſcripture or reaſon to expect; and therefore 'twou'd be a moſt intolerable preſumption to rely upon it. *My grace is ſufficient for thee*, was the utmoſt degree of conſolation vouchſafed to the choſen veſſel; he had God's faithfulneſs engaged for it, that he ſhould not be tempted above his ſtrength, but yet notwithſtanding this ſufficiency, it muſt have been poſſible for him to have fallen from

from his own ſtedfaſtneſs, otherwiſe I cannot imagine to what purpoſe he ſhould, ὑωπιάζω τὸ σῶμα, *keep under his body, and bring it into ſubjection*, and all for this reaſon, leſt that by any means when he had preach'd to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away.

11. What, did the Angels let fall their crowns of glory, and ſhall man pretend to indefectibility? He is inferiour to them in nature, and ſhall he become ſuperiour to them by grace? Shall grace ſet him above the Angels that fell, and make him equal to thoſe that ſtand? But thoſe that ſtand, ſtand by glory, even that of the beatifick viſion. The clear and full viſion of him who is infinite in goodneſs, yea the very eſſence of it, determines them to good, and ſo renders them impeccable. And ſhall grace then be ſuppoſed to have an influence equal to that of glory? But not to go ſo high as this, we need only reflect upon human nature in its beſt condition, that of innocence and integrity. Man then conteſs'd the inſtability of his nature by the abuſe of his liberty, and ſhall he now pretend to that ſtability which he had not then? If it be ſaid that there is no abſurdity in ſuppoſing fallen man by grace to have a privilege beyond what innocent man had by nature. I anſwer, that in ſome reſpects this may be true. But as to the preſent caſe, 'tis to be remember'd that grace is a ſupplement to corrupt nature, to remedy its defects, and to help its infirmities. And tho' it be not only a neceſſary, but alſo a very powerful remedy, yet it ſeems not ſo reaſonable to ſuppoſe that what was intended as a remedy to human nature in its corrupt and infirm ſtate, ſhould exceed the meaſures and poſſibilities of that ſame nature when it

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was perfect and entire, at leaſt that it ſhould ordinarily do ſo.

12. For it may be it is not abſolutely to be deny'd, but that to ſome men who have for a long time given excellent proof of their obedience, and with unwearied reſolution fought the Lord's battels, God may at length vouchſafe ſuch a plentiful portion of grace, and ſo ſtabliſh them with his free ſpirit, that they ſhall never depart from him, partly to reward their paſt fidelity, and partly, that they may become burning lamps, to give conſtant light in the temple of God. For ſince 'tis confeſs'd on all hands, that God by way of puniſhment does withdraw his grace from ſome obſtinate ſinners, and give them up after a long abuſe of his mercy, to the fulfilling of their own luſts, it may not be unreaſonable, to ſuppoſe on the other hand, that God may be ſo favourable to ſome of his moſt eminent ſervants, who have for a long time acquitted themſelves in the ſevereſt trials, as at length *to give his angels a peculiar charge over them, to keep them in all their ways.* And this ſuppoſition ſeems not a little countenanc'd from what the ſpirit ſays to the Church of *Philadelphia, Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth,* Rev. iii. 10.

13. But altho' this be granted, yet it makes nothing againſt our preſent aſſertion, as every one muſt acknowledge that attends to theſe two conſiderations. Firſt, That theſe are extraordinary inſtances of the divine favour, vouchſafed only to extraordinary perſons, and to extraordinary purpoſes; and conſequently, when we treat of God's ordinary dealings with the ſons men, muſt not come

come into computation. And ſecondly, that even theſe extraordinary perſons whom we ſuppoſe to be at length thus highly favour'd, were notwithſtanding for a great part of their lives, in a defectible condition; and that they are now no longer ſo, is ſuppoſed to be the reward of their paſt fidelity; ſo that they may ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *This I had becauſe I kept thy commandments*, Pſal. 119.

14. What hinders then, but that it be concluded poſſible for the generality of men at all times, and for all men at ſome times, to fall from a ſtate of holineſs; and after they have taſted the liberty of the ſons of God, to become again the ſervants of corruption? And ſure thoſe that aſſert the contrary, deſtroy not only the excellency, but the nature of obedience, defeat and evacuate the deſign of all Scripture exhortation; which would be as impertinent upon their ſuppoſition, as to exhort him to continue to live who is immortal, pervert the order of things, arrogating to themſelves in this ſtate of probation, the portion of confirm'd Saints: And laſtly, aſſume to themſelves as much as in this part may be allow'd to our bleſſed Saviour himſelf, and more perhaps than upon the principles of a very learned divine will be allow'd him, according to whom, even Chriſt himſelf while on earth was not without a power of ſinning. See *Epiſcopius's* examination of the opinion of *Camero* concerning grace and free-will; as alſo his anſwer to his defence. Did our Saviour ſeem to ſhrink at the apprehenſion of his ſad hour, and to be at a ſtand whether he ſhould drink off his bitter cup! Did his danger ſeem ſo conſiderable, that he was fain to betake himſelf to his great antidote prayer, and borrow courage from the conſolation of an Angel? And does mere man ſit careleſs and unconcern'd,

concern'd, ſecure of the iſſues of eternity? See the *indecorum*, the Lord is in his agony, and the diſciples ſleep on, and take their reſt. But I think I have ſaid enough to awaken them out of their dangerous ſlumber, and to convince them that all is not ſo ſafe as they dream; and that notwithſtanding the preſent firmneſs of their ſtation, there is ſtill left a poſſibility of falling.

15. But now leſt this poſſibility of falling be reduced to act, I proceed to conſider the vaſt encouragements, the infinite engagments that he who is holy has, to be holy ſtill. And theſe I ſhall chuſe to repreſent to him in theſe two general conſiderations. Firſt, that he has made the beſt choice that he could poſſibly have made; and conſequently, 'tis againſt all the reaſon in the world that he ſhould reſcind it. Secondly, that if notwithſtanding he does reſcind it, he will not only loſe the advantage of his beſt choice, but incur an oppoſite portion of miſery; and that in a greater meaſure than other ſinners. Theſe I take to be the moſt proper conſiderations to inforce the grand duty of perſeverance.

16. The conſequence of the firſt argument proceeds upon this principle, that that choice which is beſt, is not to be reſcinded. This propoſition is ſo evident, that it can hardly admit, much leſs need any proof; and 'tis practically confeſs'd by every man throughout the whole tenour of his life. For no man retracts his choice, till he has alter'd the dictate of his underſtanding, (for otherwiſe he would chuſe evil under the very formality of evil) and has entertain'd other apprehenſions of the object, than he had when he firſt choſe it. And this is that which makes up the entire notion of repentance, which is nothing elſe in its preciſe idea

idea, when abſtracted from particular matter, but a retractation of a former choice, proceeding from the alteration of the particular dictate, diſallowing that now, which was before approved. For this a man never does, till he thinks he has reaſon to do ſo. And upon this account 'tis, that God is ἀμεταμέλητος, and cannot properly repent, becauſe his underſtanding being infinite, and reaching out to all the poſſibilities of things, muſt needs dictate to his will after one uniform and conſtant manner; it being impoſſible he ſhould either diſcover ſomething afterward which he did not comprehend at firſt, or loſe the apprehenſion of ſomething which he did. But the underſtanding of man being finite and imperfect at the beſt, and oftentimes corrupted and byaſs'd by his paſſion, has at ſeveral times different apprehenſions of things; and being ſometimes under, and ſometimes out of the cloud, dictates to the will as the Sun ſhines upon the earth, with a diſuniform and unequal light. Whereupon (as it frequently happens in Courts and Senates) many decrees are enacted, which at the next ſeſſion are repealed again; tho' with this unhappineſs, that ſometimes her ſecond thoughts are worſe than her firſt; and that ſhe ſometimes retracts that which ſhe ſhould perſevere in, as well as perſeveres in that which ſhe ſhould retract. But whatever the retractation really be, 'twas always thought for the beſt when made; ſo that he that repents him of his holineſs, as well as he that repents him of his ſin, does it upon the change of his practical dictate, judging that not to be beſt now, which before was ſo pronounc'd; and conſequently, they both own the truth of the forementiond principle, that that choice which is beſt, is not to be reſcinded.

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17. This being firm, all the buſineſs in queſtion now will be, whether he that is holy has made the beſt choice or no. And if it ſhall appear that he has, then by the principle juſt now laid down, he ought not, nay, he cannot be ſo much a contradiction to himſelf, as to reſcind it. Now to convince him that he has made the beſt choice, I deſire him to conſider, firſt, That he has choſen that which God had choſen for him before; ſo that his choice ſtands recommended to him by the authority of infinite and unerring wiſdom. And this is foundation enough to warrant a certain (tho' implicit) perſuaſion, that it muſt needs be beſt for him. I ſay beſt for him, for God being already poſſeſs'd of all poſſible perfection, cannot act any thing for any ſelf-advantage; and therefore whatſoever he does is for the good of his creatures. For there is this difference between the divine love and created love, that the one ſprings from indigency, and the other from fulneſs and redundancy. And therefore as God did not at firſt ſpeak this world into being, to raiſe himſelf a monument of power and divine architecture, ſo neither does he govern the rational part of it by the precepts of religion, out of any ſelf-deſign, as if he feaſted his noſtrils with the perfumes of the altar, or his ears with the accents of an Hallelujah. *For can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wiſe may be profitable to himſelf? Is it any pleaſure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? Or is it gain to him that thou makeſt thy way perfect?* Job xxii. No certainly, and therefore when he chalk'd out the ways of righteouſneſs and holineſs for man to walk in, it could not be for any ſelf-end, but purely for the good of man, and conſequently (if infinite wiſdom be to be truſted) it muſt be his beſt choice to be holy.

18. Secondly, let him conſider, that the practice of religion conſults a man's whole intereſt; and partly of its own nature, and partly by divine conſtitution, tends to make him happy in all his capacities; and conſequently muſt needs be his beſt choice. As for impious and unjuſt practices, if they do at any time promote a man's private and ſecular intereſt, yet 'tis always both at the expence of the publick, and of his own eternal welfare; and then, *What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?* But now this is the peculiar gain of godlineſs, that it has the promiſe both of this life, and of that which is to come; that it conduces to our advantage, both here and hereafter. Intereſt and duty, are immediately link'd together in this life; and every virtue has a natural ſanction of reward and puniſhment reſpectively attending it, as might be ſhewn even with mathematick evidence upon the principles of a late writer of our own, which are very capable of ſuch an improvement. All that I ſhall farther ſay of that matter is this, that there is a difference in things antecedent to that which is made in them by the law of God. Which difference is this, that ſome things naturally tend to our hurt, and ſome to our good, which is the fundamental ground of the diſtinction of moral good and evil. Thoſe things are morally good which tend to effect our good or to make us happy, and thoſe things are morally evil which have in their natures a contrary tendency. Now God in giving his Laws (like an infinitely wiſe nd good Law-giver) has follow'd this diſtinction in nature, and has accommodated his laws to this antecedent difference in the nature of things, commanding us thoſe things which are naturally conducive

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conducive to our good, and forbidding us the contrary. So that that is made to be the matter of our duty, which in it ſelf is really our intereſt. And although it happen ſometimes through the unreaſonableneſs and injuſtice of men, that duty and intereſt interfere, and that virtue be defeated of the portion ſhe is naturally endow'd with, yet ſhe ſhall recover her own again at the great aſſize, at the day of the revelation of the righteous judgments of God. And altho' inſtead of being rewarded, it be our fortune to ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, yet we chriſtians know, that it entitles us to one of our Saviour's beatitudes; and we are alſo well aſſured from one whoſe caſe it was to be ſo dealt with, that *the ſufferings of the preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed*; and that *our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us* καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης, *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. So that whatever difficulties and hardſhips religion may ſometimes engage a man in, yet when the whole account is caſt up, he will find the practice of religion as gainful, as the belief of it is rational; that to be holy is his beſt choice; and that he has infinite reaſon to pray in the words of *Balaam*, *let me die the death of the righteous, and let my laſt end be like his*.

19. And now one would think, that one who has ſo great and ſo apparent reaſon for his choice, as the religious man has, ſhould not eaſily be brought to retract it, and ſay with thoſe in *Malachi*, *it is vain to ſerve God; and what profit is it that I have kept his ordinances?* But becauſe 'tis obſerv'd to be the nature of man to be more ſtrongly affected with puniſhments than rewards, I ſhall for his better eſtabliſhment in the purpoſes of holineſs, preſent him with the ſecond general conſideration, which is,

that if notwithſtanding the excellency of his choice, he does retract it, he will not only loſe the advantages of it, but alſo incur an oppoſite portion of miſery; and that in greater meaſure than other ſinners.

20. That he will loſe the advantages of his firſt and beſt choice, is plain from the whole tenour of the Goſpel, perſeverance to the end, being the expreſs condition of ſalvation. And that he will incur an oppoſite portion of miſery, is plain from the double ſanction of rewards and puniſhments, wherewith God has bound us to the obſervance of his otherwiſe ſufficiently profitable laws. And altho' this be ſufficient in the ſevereſt tryals, to preſerve us from apoſtacy; and when flames of fire ſurround us, to ſecure our footing in the holy ground, yet thus far is but to dye the common death of ſinners, and to be viſited after the viſitation of the impenitent. *But now if the Lord make a new thing*, and the deſerter of piety be puniſh'd in a greater meaſure than other ſinners, *then ſhall ye underſtand that this man has provoked the Lord.*

21. And that he ſhall be ſo puniſh'd, is the peculiar conſideration which I ſhall now inſiſt upon; and which I prove from the heinouſneſs of his crime, apoſtaſie having in it many degrees of evil beyond the common ſtate of ſin. *For if after they have eſcaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteouſneſs, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*

22. But to repreſent the heinouſneſs of apoſtaſie a little more particularly; and that this ſin above

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all others may appear to be exceeding ſinful, let me deſire the unthinking man to conſider, firſt, that he that falls back from a courſe of holy living, does in a ſpecial manner grieve the Holy Spirit of God. He ſacrilegiouſly takes that from him, which he had once moſt ſolemnly conſecrated to his ſervice; he defiles the ſeat of his reſidence, alienates it to profane uſes, blots out the tetragrammation of the temple, and ſuffers it to be no longer holineſs to the Lord. He diſinherits his God, diſturbs his reſt, and forces him to leave the habitation whereof he had once ſaid, *this ſhall be my reſt for ever, here will I dwell, for I have a delight therein.* Add to this affront of the Holy Spirit that reſided in him, that he grieves the Angels that attended him, and with much concern and hopes, miniſter'd to his ſalvation. Thoſe diſappointed and unſucceſsful guardians, with ſorrow cry out to one another, as the Angels did in the Jewiſh temple, when thro' many profanations it was no longer fit for their charge μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν, let us depart hence. Neither does he diſappoint the tutelar miniſters of his ſalvation only, but cauſes univerſal grief in Heaven. Thoſe kind and compaſſionate ſpirits, who before rejoyc'd at his repentance and converſion, and began to reckon upon the new acceſſion they ſhould have to the quire of Heaven, now tune their harps to the ſtrains of ſorrow, and lament the diſappointment of their hopes. *Joſephus de Bell. Jud. lib. 7.*

23. Conſider ſecondly, that to the ſin of apoſtaſie is added the circumſtance of inexcuſableneſs. The man has enter'd within the veil, has ſeen the inner beauties of the holy place, and has been taught the ſecrets of the Kingdom; his underſtanding has been inſtructed, and his will has been entertain'd; he

has given proof of his powers and abilities, and has conquer'd the ſteepeſt part of the mount; his difficulties leſſen, and his ſtrength increaſes; ſo that if now he retreat, and ſlide back to the bottom of the hill, he has nothing whereby to excuſe himſelf either before God or man; but ſtands in the higheſt ſenſe of the phraſe, Αὐτοκατάκειτος, ſelf condemn'd. We generally make ſome allowances for the miſcarriages of thoſe who were never enlightened, and have had no acquaintance with the ſubſtantial delights of religion, and the ſatisfaction of ſober counſels, becauſe indeed they knew no better; but when we are told, that the wiſeſt of men, after a cenſure of vanity, paſs'd upon the whole creation, and a long application of his mind to the excellent theories of moral and divine knowledge, was yet towards the evening of his life, when the ſun drove hard, and the ſhadows encreas'd, drawn aſide by ſtrange women; and that his wiſdom departed from him like the dream wherein it was given him, this indeed we may lament, but cannot excuſe.

24. Conſider thirdly, that he who falls from a ſtate of holineſs, muſt needs do ſtrange violence to his reaſon. If he be a new convert, he cannot ſure without great reluctancy, defile that temple which he has ſo lately ſwept and garniſh'd. And if he be a ſaint of ſome conſiderable ſtanding, ſure he muſt be the more unwilling to break off a long dated innocence, for the unſatisfying pleaſure of a moment. For tho' men of deſperate and bankrupt fortunes have little regard to their expences, becauſe ſhould they ſave them, the tide of their eſtates won't riſe much the higher; and ſo they think it impertinent to be frugal, when there's no hopes of being rich. Yet they that ſee their heaps begin to ſwell, and that they are within the neighbourhood of wealth, think

think it worth while to be ſaving, and improve their growing ſtock. But then after a long thrift and ſparing, to throw away the hard purchaſe of many years in one nights gaming, is one of the prodigies of folly and indiſcretion. And yet this is the very caſe of him that lets go his integrity.

25. Conſider fourthly and laſtly, that the apoſtate has the greateſt ingratitude imaginable to aggravate his folly. Indeed, every ſinner is a very ungrateful perſon, becauſe he treſpaſſes againſt his beſt friend and benefactor, againſt him that made him, againſt him that died for him, and againſt him that follows him with the daily offers of his grace; and lays ſtratagems of mercy for his reformation. But the back-ſliding man ſins againſt greater mercies, endearments and obligations yet. He has liv'd in the ſervice of his Lord, has receiv'd the earneſt of his ſpirit, he has been of his family; nay more, he has been call'd his friend, he has eaten with him at his table, he has dwelt under the endearments of familiar converſe, he has been with him in his banqueting houſe, where the banner that was over him was love, he has plighted his faith, given his heart, and ſaid with paſſion, *my beloved is mine and I am his*; ſo that to turn renegade now, is the greateſt baſeneſs and ingratitude conceivable; 'tis to betray his Lord and Maſter after the obligations of intimacy and diſcipleſhip; 'tis to break the tables of his law, after he has been with him on the mount, and ſeen the back parts of his glory.

26. Since therefore the apoſtate has ſo many peculiar circumſtances to aggravate his crime beyond the guilt of common ſinners, *of how much ſorer puniſhment ſuppoſe ye ſhall he be thought worthy, who has thus trodden under foot the Son of God; and has counted the*

blood of the covenant wherewith he was ſanctified, an unholy thing; and has done deſpite to the ſpirit of grace? which was the laſt general conſideration.

27. What now remains, but that upon a ſerious conſideration of the premiſſes, he that is holy think himſelf highly concern'd to be holy ſtill. *That he lift up the hands that hang down, and ſtrengthen the feeble knees*; that he *hold faſt that which he has, that no man takes his crown*; that he unravel not his holy vows, nor put himſelf back in the accounts of eternity; that he be not frighted or laught out of his religion, ſince 'tis his beſt and wiſeſt choice, and will be found to be ſo in ſpite of all the prophane drollery of ſuppoſed wits, in the day when *wiſdom ſhall be juſtified of all her children. For then ſhall the righteous man ſtand in great boldneſs before the face of ſuch as have afflicted him, and made no account of his labours. And they ſhall ſay within themſelves, this was he whom we had ſometimes in deriſion, and a proverb of reproach; we fools counted his life madneſs, and his end to be without honour. How is he numbred among the chrildren of God, and his lot is among the Saints!* Wherefore again, let him that is holy, be holy ſtill. Let him but maintain his ſtation during his ſhort warfare here on earth, and he ſhall be hereafter confirm'd both in holineſs and happineſs; and be fix'd in that centre where he ſhall for ever reſt. For ſo ſays the Spirit to the churches, *him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out*, Rev. 3. 12.

A Diſcourſe concerning HEROICK PIETY; *wherein its notion is ſtated, and its practice recommended.*

1. SInce the practice of religion in general, is not only the natural inſtrument of our preſent happineſs, but alſo the only and indiſpenſable condition of our future; one would think there were but little left for the orator to do here; the naked efficacy of ſelf-love, and a ſerious conſideration of our true and main intereſt, being ſufficient to engage us upon religious performances. But he that ſhall undertake to recommend the practice of heroick piety, has a much heavier task, not only becauſe he perſuades to higher degrees of virtue, but becauſe he is to addreſs himſelf wholly to a weaker principle. For ſince our intereſt is ſecured by the performance of neceſſary duty, there remains nothing but a principle of generoſity to carry us on to the higher advances, the more glorious atchievements in religion. And what ſmall probability there is that it will often do ſo, may appear from the ill ſucceſs of the former and more prevailing principle. For if the greateſt intereſt imaginable can prevail with ſo very few to perform what is indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſecure it, ſure there is little hopes that generoſity, which is a much weaker principle, ſhould engage many upon greater performances.

2. But yet, notwithſtanding theſe diſcouragements, ſince our bleſſed Saviour has taught us to pray, not only for the performance of God's will in general, but that it be *done on earth as it is in Heaven*;

Heaven; that is, with the greateſt zeal, readineſs, and alacrity, with all the degrees of ſeraphick ardency that frail mortality is capable of, I think a perſuaſive to heroick piety may be a proper and uſeful undertaking; it being very reaſonable, we ſhould make that the object of our endeavours, which our Saviour thought fit to make the matter of our prayers.

3. In diſcourſing upon this ſubject, I ſhall proceed in this method. 1. I ſhall ſtate the notion of heroick piety, and ſhew what I mean by it. 2. I ſhall demonſtrate that there is ſuch a thing. 3. I ſhall offer ſome perſuaſives to recommend the practice of it.

4. The notion of heroick piety will be beſt underſtood by conſidering what the moraliſts mean by heroick virtue. For the one carries the ſame proportion in religion, that the other does in morality. Now not to trouble our ſelves with an etymological account of the name, which is well known to be of an heathen extraction, by heroick virtue, I ſuppoſe, the moraliſts do generally mean ſuch a vehement and intenſe purſuance of a man's laſt and beſt end, as engages him upon ſuch excellent and highly commendable actions, which advance him much above the ordinary level of humane nature; and which he might wholly omit, and yet ſtill maintain the character of a good man. *Ariſtotle* in his ethicks, l. 7. c. 1. calls it, ἡ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετὴν, that virtue that is above us. By which I ſuppoſe, he does not mean that it is above our reach, and unattainable, but either that it is above our obligation, or rather that when it is attain'd, it will elevate us above our ſelves.

5. In proportion to this notion of heroick virtue, I underſtand by heroick piety thoſe excellent degrees and eminences of religion, which, tho' to

arrive

arrive at be extremely laudable, yet we may fall ſhort of them without ſin, God having not bound them upon us as parts of duty, or made them the conditions of our ſalvation, but only recommended them by way of counſel, and left them as inſtances of generoſity. This heroick piety conſiſts rather in the degrees than in the kinds of chriſtian virtue, and they are ſuch degrees as are moſt eminent and excellent in themſelves, and that tend highly to the perfection of the nature of man; but are not bound upon him by any poſitive and expreſs law of God, and ſo may be left undone without any diſobedience to it, and therefore when done are the more commendable and rewardable. So that in ſhort they are not acts of ſtrict indiſpenſable duty; but inſtances of extraordinary and uncommanded perfection. According to that ſaying, (I think of St. *Jerom*) *non cogo, non impero, ſed propono palmam, præmia oſtendo.*

6. Thus far of the notion of heroick piety. I come now to my ſecond undertaking, which was to ſhew, that there is ſuch a thing. Tho' univerſality and ſincerity of obedience be indiſpenſably required of every chriſtian, and conſequently every part of religion obliges under the penalty of damnation as to its kind; yet that there may be ſome degrees, to the attainment of which we are not ſo obliged, would evidently appear from the proof of this one ſingle propoſition, that every one is not bound to do what is beſt. The reaſonableneſs of which propoſition may be argued from the very nature of the thing; for ſince that which is beſt is a ſuperlative, it neceſſarily ſuppoſes the poſitive to be good: And if ſo, then we are not bound to that which is beſt; for if we were, then that which is only good would be evil, (it being ſhort of what we are bound to) which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. 7.

7. But leſt this argument ſhould not be thought ſatisfying, as indeed I am not fully ſatisfy'd with it, I farther conſider; that the Scripture conſiſts of counſels as well as commands. Now if ſome things are matter of counſel only, 'tis obvious to conclude two things. 1. From their being counſell'd, that they are good (nothing being matter of counſel but what is ſo;) and 2. from their being only counſell'd, that they do not oblige; and conſequently, that there are ſome degrees of good that we are not obliged to.

8. It is farther obſervable, that in Scripture there is mention made of a threefold will of God, *Rom.* xii. 2. τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον, *that will which is good, that which is well-pleaſing, and that which is perfect.* The firſt of theſe denotes abſolute duty, the two laſt the various degrees of perfection and heroick excellence. Thus for St. *Paul* to preach the Goſpel to the *Corinthians*, was an act of ſtrict duty, which he could not leave undone, without incurring that woe which he annexes to the omiſſion of it, 1 *Cor.* ix. 16. τόδε ἀδαπάνως κηρύσσειν περαιρέσεως φιλοτιμία, καὶ διὰ τῦτο καύχημα ἐστι. "But to preach without charging them was an in-" ſtance of generoſity, and in that reſpect there " was room for boaſting, as Dr. *Hammond* quotes from *Theophylact.* Thus again, for a *Jew* to allot the tenth part of his revenue every third year toward the relief of the poor, was an act of expreſs duty; and in doing of that, he would but ſatisfie the obligation of the law: But now if in his charitable contributions he ſhould exceed that proportion; according to the degrees of the exceſs, ſo would the degrees of his perfection be. Thus again in the matter of devotion, daily prayer is generally

ly concluded to be a duty; and by ſome criticks, that it be twice perform'd, in proportion to the returns of the Jewiſh ſacrifices, morning and evening: But now if a more generouſly diſpoſed chriſtian ſhould add a third time, or out of abundance of zeal ſhould come up to the pſalmiſt's reſolution of (*ſeven times a day will I praiſe thee*) this will be a free-will offering, well pleaſing and of ſweet ſavour, but not commanded.

9. From theſe and many other inſtances, which if neceſſary, I could eaſily produce, it plainly appears that religion does not conſiſt in an indiviſible point, but has a latitude, and is capable of more and leſs; and conſequently, there is room for voluntary oblations, and acts of heroick piety, as ſeems ſufficiently plain from the whole ſtate of St. *Paul's* determination as to the lawfulneſs of marriage, and the preference of a ſingle life before it as a ſtate of greater excellence and perfection.

10. If it be objected here, that what is ſuppoſed to be thus heroically perform'd, is incluſively enjoin'd by virtue of thoſe comprehenſive words, (*thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul*, &c.) To this I anſwer, that whether by the love of the text we underſtand a ſincere love of God, in oppoſition to that which is falſe and hypocritical, or an intire love of God in oppoſition to that which is partial and divided, ſtill there will be a latitude in this precept of loving God, as well as in other inſtances of religion; it being very poſſible for two perſons to love God ſincerely, and with their whole ſoul, and yet in different meaſures (which is obſerv'd even among the Angels, the Seraphins having their name from their exceſs of love;) nay, for the ſame perſon always to love God ſincerely, or intirely, and yet at ſome times to exceed himſelf; and

and with his Saviour (who to be ſure never fail'd of neceſſary duty) to pray yet more earneſtly.

11. There is another objection yet behind, which I think my ſelf concern'd to anſwer, as well in my own defence, as that of my agument. Some perhaps may be ſo weak to imagine, that by aſſerting ſuch a thing as heroick piety, and that a chriſtian may do more than he is commanded, I too much favour the doctrine of ſupererrogation. But I conſider, for a man to do more than he is commanded, is an ambiguous expreſſion, and may denote either that he can perform the whole law of God and more; or that, tho' he fail of his duty in many inſtances, and conſequently with the reſt of mankind, is concluded under ſin; yet in ſome others he may exceed it, by preſſing forward to ſome degrees of excellency he is not obliged to. I do not aſſert the former of theſe, but the latter, that there are certain degrees in religion, which we are not obliged to under pain of ſin; and conſequently, that he who arrives ſo far, does (according to the later notion of the phraſe) do more than he is commanded.

12. Having in the foregoing periods ſtated the notion of heroick piety, and ſhewn the reaſonableneſs of the thing; I proceed now to my third and laſt undertaking, which was, to offer ſome perſuaſives to recommend the practice of it. Firſt then, I conſider that religion is the perfection of a man, the improvement and accompliſhment of that part of him wherein he reſembles his Maker, the purſuance of his beſt and laſt end, and conſequently his happineſs. And will a man ſet bounds to his happineſs? Will he be no more happy than he is commanded, no more than what will juſt ſerve to ſecure him from a miſerable eternity? Is not happineſs deſirable for it ſelf, as well as for the avoiding

ing of miſery? Why then do we deal with it as with dangerous phyſick, weighing it by grains and ſcruples, and nice proportions? Why do we drink ſo moderately of the river of paradiſe, ſo ſparingly of the well of life? Are we afraid of making too nigh advances to the ſtate of Angels, of becoming too like God, of antedating Heaven? Are we afraid our happineſs will flow in too thick upon us, that we ſhall not bear up againſt the tide, but ſink under the too powerful enjoyment? Hereafter indeed, when we are bleſt with the Beatifick Viſion, and the glories of the divine brightneſs ſhall flaſh too ſtrong upon our ſouls, ſo that our happineſs begins to be in danger of being leſſen'd by its greatneſs; We may then, with the Angels that attend the throne, veil our faces, and divert ſome of thee too exuberant bleſſedneſs: But now in this region, we are far enough from being under the line; there is no danger of ſuch extremity, but rather the contrary; and therefore it would be now moſt adviſable for us to be as happy, and to that end, as religious as we can.

13. Secondly, I conſider, that ſince God, out of the abundance of his overflowing and communicative goodneſs, was pleas'd to create and deſign man for the beſt of ends, the fruition of himſelf in endleſs happineſs; and ſince he has preſcribed no other conditions for the attainment of this happineſs, but that we would live happily here in this ſtate of probation, having made nothing our duty but what would have been beſt for us to do whether he had commanded it or no; and has thereby declared, that he is ſo far only pleas'd with our ſervices to him, as they are beneficial to our ſelves; this muſt needs be a moſt indearing engagement to one that has the leaſt ſpark of generoſity or ingenuity,

ty, to do ſomething for the ſake of ſo good a God, beyond the meaſures of neceſſity, and the regards of his main and final intereſt. This is the only tribute of gratitude we are capable of paying God, for giving us ſuch good, ſuch reaſonable and righteous laws. Had the conditions of our eternal welfare been never ſo hard, arbitrary, and contradictory to our preſent happineſs, yet mere intereſt would engage us to perform neceſſary duty; and ſhall we do no more out of a principle of love to our excellent Lawgiver, for making our preſent happineſs the condition of our future? Shall the love of God conſtrain us to do no more than what we would do merely for the love of our ſelves; Shall we ſtint our performances to him, who ſets no meaſures to his love of us? Can our generoſity be ever more ſeaſonably employ'd, than in endeavouring to pleaſe him in extraordinary meaſures, whoſe pleaſure is to ſee us happy, even while we pleaſe him? For ſo is the will of the wiſe and good Governour of the world, that in ſerving him we ſhould ſerve our ſelves; and like *Adam* in his dreſſing and cultivation of paradiſe, at the ſame time diſcharge the employment which God ſets us about, and conſult our own convenience: So that it fares with us in our religious exerciſes, as with the votary that ſacrifices at the altar, who all the while he pleaſes and ſerves his God, enjoys the perfumes of his own incenſe.

14. Thirdly, I conſider, that every man has a reſtleſs principle of love implanted in his nature, a certain magnetiſm of paſſion, whereby he continually aſpires to ſomething more excellent than himſelf, either really or apparently, with a deſign and inclination to perfect his being. This affection and diſpoſition of mind all men have, and at all times.

times. Our other paſſions ebb and flow like the tide, have their ſeaſons and periods like intermitting fevers. But this of love, is as conſtant as our radical heat, as inſeparable as thought, as even and equal as the motions of time. For no man does or can deſire to be happy more at one time than at another, beeauſe he deſires it always in the higheſt degree poſſible. 'Tis true, his love, as to particular objects, may increaſe or decreaſe, according to the various apprehenſions he has of their excellencies; but then, like motion in the univerſe, what it loſes in one part, it gains in another; ſo that in the whole it remains always alike, and the ſame. Now this amorous principle, which every man receives with his ſoul, and which is breath'd into him with the breath of life, muſt neceſſarily have an object about which it may exerciſe it ſelf, there being no ſuch thing in love (if in nature) as an element of ſelf-ſufficient fire. For tho' we may eaſily and truely frame an abſtract notion of love or deſire in general, yet if we reſpect its real exiſtence, we ſhall as ſoon find firſt matter without form, as love without a particular object. And, as 'tis neceſſary to the very being of love that it have an object, ſo is it to our content and happineſs, that it be a proportionate and ſatisfying one; for otherwiſe, that paſſion which was intended as an inſtrument of happineſs, will prove an affliction and torment to us. Now there is but one ſuch object to be found, and that is God. In the application of our paſſions to other things, the advice of the Poet is exceeding neceſſary,

Quicquid amas cupias placuiſſe nimis. Martial.

That we ſhould be very cautious how far we ſuffer our ſelves to be engaged in the love of any thing, becauſe there is nothing but diſappointment in the

enjoyment, and uncertainty in the poſſeſſion. We muſt needs therefore be miſerable in our love, unleſs God be the object of it. But neither is our happineſs ſufficiently ſecured by making God the object of our love, unleſs we concentre our whole affections upon him, and (in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the phraſe) *love him with all our heart, and with all our ſoul.* For otherwiſe, whatever portion of our love does not run in this channel, muſt neceſſarily fix upon diſproportionate and unſatisfying objects; and conſequently, be an inſtrument of diſcontent to us. 'Tis neceſſary therefore, to the compleating of our happineſs, that that object ſhould engroſs all our affections to it ſelf, which only can ſatisfie them; and (according to the compariſon of an ingenious *Platoniſt*) that our minds ſhould have the ſame habitude to God, that the eye has to light. Now the eye does not only love light above other things, but delights in nothing elſe. I confeſs, ſuch an abſolute and entire dedication of our love to God as this, is not always practicable in this life. It is the privilege and happineſs of thoſe confirm'd ſpirits, who are ſo ſwallow'd up in the comprehenſions of eternity, and ſo perpetually raviſh'd with the glories of the divine beauty, that they have not the power to turn aſide to any other object. But tho' this ſuperlative excellence of divine love, be not attainable on this ſide of the thick darkneſs, it being the proper effect of open viſion, and not of contemplation; yet however, by the help of this latter, we may arrive to many degrees of it; and the more entire and undivided our love is to God, the fewer diſappointments and diſſatisfactions

Marſilius Ficinus, Tom. 2. pag. 315.

factions we ſhall meet with in the world; which is a very ſtrong engagement to heroick piety.

15. Fourthly, I conſider, that the degrees of our reward ſhall be proportionable to the degrees of our piety: We ſhall reap as plentifully as we ſow; and at the great day of retribution, we ſhall find, that beſides the general collation of happineſs, peculiar coronets of glory are prepared for eminent Saints. Indeed, all hearty and ſincere lovers of God and religion, ſhall partake of the glories of the Kingdom; but ſome ſhall ſit nearer the throne than others, and enjoy a more intimate perception of the divine beauty. All the true followers of Jeſus ſhall indeed feaſt with him at the great ſupper; but ſome ſhall be placed nearer to him than others, and ſtill there ſhall be a beloved diſciple that ſhall lean on his boſom. I know this doctrine concerning different degrees of glory, is (and indeed what is there that is not) very much queſtion'd by ſome, and peremptorily deny'd by others; but ſince it is ſo highly agreeable to the goodneſs and bounty of God, and to the catholick meaſures of ſenſe and reaſon, and is ſo mightily favour'd, if not expreſly aſſerted in many places of Scripture, I ſhall not here go about to eſtabliſh the truth of it; but taking it for granted, do urge this as another conſideration of great moment, toward encouraging the practice of heroick piety.

16. Fifthly and laſtly, I conſider, that we have indeed but very little time to ſerve God in. The life of man at longeſt is but ſhort; and conſidering how ſmall a part of it we live, much ſhorter. If we deduct from the computation of our years (as we muſt do, if we will make a true eſtimate of our life) that part of our time which is ſpent in the incogitancy of infancy and childhood, the impertinence

nence and heedleſneſs of youth, in the neceſſities of nature, eating, drinking, ſleeping, and other refreſhments; in buſineſs and worldly concerns, engagments with friends and relations, in the offices of civility and mutual intercourſe, beſides a thouſand other unneceſſary avocations; we ſhall find that there is but a ſmall portion left, even for the retirements of ſtudy, for our improvement in arts and ſciences, and other intellectual accompliſhments. But then, if we conſider what great diſburſements of our time are made upon them alſo, we ſhall find, that religion is crowded up into a very narrow compaſs; ſo narrow, that were not the rewards of Heaven matter of expreſs revelation, 'twould be the greateſt preſumption imaginable, to hope for them upon the condition of ſuch inconſiderable ſervices. Since then our time of ſerving God is ſo very ſhort, ſo infinitely diſproportionate to the rewards we expect from him, 'tis but a reaſonable piece of ingenuity, to work with all our might, and do as much in it as we can: To ſupply the poverty of time by frugal management, and intenſeneſs of affection; to ſerve God earneſtly, vigorouſly, and zealouſly; and in one days devotion, to abbreviate the ordinary piety of many years. 'Tis ſaid of the Devil, that he proſecuted his malicious deſigns againſt the church with greater earneſtneſs and vigour, becauſe *he knew he had but a ſhort time*, Rev. xii. 12. And ſhall not the ſame conſideration prevail with a generous ſoul, to do as much for God and religion, as the Devil did againſt them? 'Tis a ſhame for him that has but a ſhort part to act upon the ſtage, not to perform it well, eſpecially when he is to act it but once. Man has but one ſtate of probation, and that of an exceeding ſhort continuance; and therefore, ſince he cannot

not ſerve God long, he ſhould ſerve him much, employ every minute of his life to the beſt advantage, thicken his devotions, hallow ever day in his kalender by religious exerciſes, and every action in his life by holy references and deſignments; for let him make what haſte he can to be wiſe, time will out-run him. This is a conſideration of infinite moment to him that duly weighs it; and he that thus numbers his days, will find great reaſon to apply his heart to more than ordinary degrees of wiſdom.

Contemplation and Love: Or, the methodical aſſent of the Soul to GOD, by the ſteps of Meditation.

CONTEMPLATION I.

That 'tis neceſſary Man ſhould have ſome end.

1. IN the depth of ſolitude and ſilence, having withdrawn my ſelf not only from all worldly commerce, but from all thoughts concerning any thing without my own ſphere; I retire wholly into my ſelf, and there ſpeculate the compoſition of my intellectual nature.

2. And here, beſides that faculty of perception whereby I apprehend objects, whether material or

immaterial, without any material ſpecies; (which in the *Carteſian* dialect I call pure intellect) and that other of apprehending objects as preſent, under a corporeal image or repreſentation; (which I diſtinguiſh from the other power of perception by the name of imagination) I ſay, beſides theſe two, I obſerve an appetitive faculty, whereby I incline to apparent good; and that either by a bare act of propenſion, or endeavour to unite with the agreeable object; which anſwers to pure intellect, and may be call'd will, (or rather volition) or by ſuch a propenſion of the ſoul, as is alſo accompany'd with a commotion of the blood and ſpirits; which anſwers to imagination, and is the ſame with the paſſion of love.

3. And of this I farther meditate, and by ſelf-reflexion experiment; that altho' the perceptive faculty be not always in actual exerciſe, or at leaſt not in the ſame degree of it: (For, if according to the *Carteſian* hypotheſis there be no intermiſſion of cogitation, yet 'tis moſt certain, that its applications are not always equal and uniform) though this I ſay, be true as to the perceptive; yet, I find by attending to the operations of my nature, that the appetitive faculty is not only always in act, but in the ſame degree of intention and application. As it never has any total intermiſſion, ſo neither is it ſubject (as indeed every thing elſe in man is) to ebbs and flows, but acts uniformly as well as conſtantly. This amorous biaſs and endeavour of the ſoul, is like that ſtock of motion which the *French* Philoſopher ſuppoſes the univerſe at firſt endowed with, which continues always at the ſame rate, not to be abated or increas'd. Not that this equality of love is to be underſtood in reference to particular objects, any more than that of motion in reference

to

to particular bodies; but only, that it gains in one part, as much as it loſes in another; ſo as in the whole, to remain equal and uniform.

4. For however various and unconſtant I may be in my love of particular objects, according to the various apprehenſion I have of their reſpective excellencies; yet certainly, I purſue happineſs in general with the ſame earneſtneſs and vigour; and do not love, or wiſh well to my ſelf, more at one time than at another.

5. And indeed, ſince all my inconſtancy in the proſecution of particular objects proceeds from the variety of my apprehenſions concerning their excellency; and the only reaſon why I withdraw my affection from this, or that thing, is, becauſe I diſcern, or ſuſpect, that happineſs not to be there which I expected, it is hence plainly argued *a poſteriori*, that I ſtand at all times equally affected towards happineſs it ſelf. As he that is therefore only variouſly affected towards the means, according as he variouſly apprehends their ſerviceableneſs to the end, may be truly ſaid, to affect the end it ſelf always alike.

6. Nor can it poſſibly be otherwiſe, than that I ſhould thus point at happineſs with an equal verticity: Becauſe I always affect it in the higheſt degree that is poſſible, which admits of no latitude. For I conſider my ſelf here, as a neceſſary agent; and accordingly as ſuch, can neither ſuſpend the whole act, nor any one degree of it, but muſt needs operate to the utmoſt ſtretch of my power. This ſpring of my ſoul (my appetitive faculty) is always at its full bent; and accordingly, preſſes and endeavours with its whole elaſticity.

7. For ſince good or happineſs is the utmoſt object of my appetitive, it muſt needs employ its

whole power; otherwiſe, ſo much of it as is not in act, will be for ever uncapable of being ſo; (there being nothing left beyond that to bring it into act) and conſequently, will be planted in me in vain, which I think abſurd to admit; and therefore find it neceſſary to conclude, that my appetitive is wholly employ'd in the love of happineſs; or that I always love it to the utmoſt capacity of my faculty.

8. Since therefore, I find in my ſelf an appetitive faculty, which is always in actual exerciſe, and that after an even and equal meaſure; and not only ſo, but alſo in the very height of activity and invigoration; I am by the clue of meditation farther led to conclude, that there muſt be ſome centre for this weight, ſome object or other, either within or without me, of ſuch ample, copious, and ſolid excellence, as may anſwer to the full extent of my deſires, bear the whole ſtreſs of my inclining ſoul, and ſuch as may well deſerve to be call'd the end of man.

9. For I cannot think it any way conſiſtent with the goodneſs of that great being, which call'd me out of the womb of nothing to what I am, to plant in me ſuch an amorous principle, which at no time lies dormant, but is always equally awake, and acting with the utmoſt plenitude of its vigour; ſuppoſing there were no proportionable object in the whole latitude of entity for it to fix and bottom upon. It being only a greater preparation and qualification for miſery, to have enlarged faculties and appetites, when there is nothing to afford them agreeable ſatisfaction. Which however ſome may be juſtly ſubjected to for their after-demerit, can yet never be reaſonably ſuppoſed to be the antecedent will of God.

10. And

10. And this I am farther induced to believe, when I conſider how the great Author of nature, has made proviſion for the entertainment of our animal faculties, and particular appetites: All our ſenſes, ſeeing, hearing, taſting, ſmelling and touching, have their proper objects, and opportunities of pleaſure reſpectively. Which makes it very unlikely, that our great and general appetite of being happy, ſhould be the only one that is diſinherited and unprovided for. Eſpecially, conſidering that the enjoyment and indulgence of any of the reſt is then only, and in ſuch inſtances and circumſtances reſtrain'd, when the greater intereſts of happineſs are thereby croſs'd and defeated. Which argues that the true happineſs of man is the thing chiefly regarded by God; and conſequently, that there is a proviſion for that great appetite of his being happy, as well as for any of the reſt.

11. Which is yet farther confirm'd to me, when I conſider, that there is an exemplification of it in the material part of the univerſe; the moſt ponderous body that is, has its centre, towards which it always preſſes, and in which it ſettles with full acquieſcence. Now ſince there is ſomething in ſpiritual beings which correſponds to weight in bodies, (according to that of St. *Auſtin*, *Amor tuus eſt pondus tuum*) the analogy of the thing perſuades me to think, that there is alſo ſomething which ſhall be to them in the nature of a centre.

12. And as the contrary is inconſiſtent with the divine goodneſs, ſo neither can I reconcile it to the wiſdom of him who made all things in number, weight and meaſure, to be ſo much out in his proportions, as to create an appetite too high, vigorous, and craving, for the excellency and fulneſs of any object. This would be like making a body too

heavy

heavy for the central poiſe; or, as if the ſpring of a watch ſhould be made too ſtrong for the wheel; or any other ſuch diſproportionate operations, which neither comports with the geometry of the divine mind, nor with the exact harmony of his other works.

13. The concluſion therefore from theſe premiſſes is, that man is not as a body for ever rolling on in an infinite vacuity; or as a needle continually trembling for an embrace: But that he has his proper end and centre, to which 'tis poſſible for him to arrive; and in which, as impoſſible for him when once arrived, not fully to acquieſce.

The PRAYER.

MY God, my Creator, who by that active principle of love and immenſe deſire thou haſt interwoven with my nature, haſt given me fair grounds to conclude, that there muſt be ſome end on which I may fix and centre with the full ſtreſs of my faculties; point out to me by the guidance of thy ſpirit this my true end, direct me in the purſuance, and bring me to the attainment of it. Let me neither miſtake my true centre, nor by any irregular or oblique motion, decline from it. But as thou haſt appointed me for happineſs, and furniſhed me with natural capacities of receiving it, ſo let it be thy good pleaſure to poſſeſs my ſoul with ſuch a ſerious and diligent concern for my great intereſt, that I may not by any default of mine, fail of that excellent good which will fill all the emptineſſes of my ſoul; leave no deſire unſatisfy'd, and no trouble I can undergo in the queſt of it, unrewarded. O

ſuffer

ſuffer me not to be diſappointed of that excellent, that only good: But as thou haſt made me aſpire towards it infinitely, ſo grant I may enjoy it eternally, for thy great love and goodneſs ſake. *Amen.*

CONTEMPLATION II.

That 'tis impoſſible Man ſhould be his own end.

1. BEing from my yeſterdays contemplation of my intellectual nature, and the ſtock of deſires therein implanted, led to this concluſion, that 'tis neceſſary man ſhould have ſome end; I now conſider, that 'tis but to carry on the thread of the ſame contemplation a little farther, and 'twill as evidently appear, that 'tis impoſſible man ſhould be his own end.

2. For while I ſtand fix'd in the contemplation of my ſelf, I obſerve, that I have this appetitive principle, not only in ſuch a manner as anſwers to weight in bodies, but alſo ſo as to be analogous to gravitation, that is to weight not only *in actu primo*, but in *actu ſecundo*, as it denotes ſuch an inclination of body, whereby not only one part preſſes againſt another, but whereby the whole leans, and endeavours to ſomething beyond the bounds of its own circumference.

3. For, beſides acts of ſelf-complacency, whereby I delight and pleaſe my ſelf in the perfections of my nature, and turn as it were upon my own axis;

axis ; I find in me a great deal of extatical love, which continually carries me out to good without my ſelf ; which I endeavour to cloſe and unite with, in hopes of bettering my preſent ſtate, and of ſupplying from without what I ſeek, but cannot find within.

4. Hence therefore I conclude, that I am not (whatever complacencies I may ſometimes, take in my ſelf) a central or ſelf-terminative being ; it being as impoſſible that what is ſo, ſhould love any thing without, (as love is taken for deſire or aſpiring to good) as that a body ſhould gravitate in the centre. That which loves any thing without, wants ſomething within. If therefore I gravitate, I am off from the centre ; conſequently, not my one centre.

5. And that I cannot ever centre in my ſelf, and be my own end, is yet farther evidenc'd to me, when I contemplate the great diſproportion between my appetitive and all my other perfections, whether of body or of mind. I deſire both more kinds of pleaſure than they all can afford, and more degrees of pleaſure in the ſame kind. Which muſt neceſſarily be, becauſe my deſires are extended to all poſſible good, but my real endowments and perfections are infinitely ſhort of that extent. And by conſequence, my deſires cannot be cramp'd within the narrow bounds of my own ſphere, but will of neceſſity run out farther, even as far as there is good without it.

6. And as there is a manifeſt diſproportion between my ſtock of ſelf-perfection and my appetitive, as to its objective latitude, (*viz.*) the kinds and degrees of happineſs, ſo is there no leſs as to the intenſeneſs of its acts. This appetitive of mine (as was remark'd in the preceding contemplation)

is

is alway in an equal invigoration, and burns with an even and uniform heat; but I have not within my ſelf fewel enough to maintain this flame in an equal height. I always equally deſire, but I am not always equally deſirable; partly becauſe I am ſometimes (even in my own partial judgment) in a condition of leſs excellence both as to my morals and intellectuals, than at other times; and partly, becauſe the ſtock of my perfections, tho' 'twere poſſible they could be always alike as my deſires are, yet being both finite in nature, and few in number, cannot bear a long and uninterrupted enjoyment, and appear ſtill equally grateful under it; any more than a ſhort poem, tho' in it ſelf equally excellent, can pleaſe equally after a million of repetitions.

7. Hence it comes to paſs, that I do not always take an equal complacency in my ſelf, but am oftentimes (eſpecially after long retirements) apt to be melancholy, and to grow weary of my own company; ſo that I am fain to lay aſide my own ſelf (as it were) for a while, and relieve the penury of ſolitude with the variety of company, and ſo whet my appetite toward my ſelf as I do toward my meat, by faſting and abſtemiouſneſs.

8. Since therefore, I always deſire equally, but not my ſelf: (being not upon the two accounts before-mention'd always equally deſirable) it follows, that the ſteadineſs and evenneſs of this my flame, muſt depend upon ſome other fewel, good which is without me. And conſequently, I do not terminate in my ſelf, and ſo am not my own end. Which indeed is the ſole and incommunicable prerogative of the infinitely great and bleſſed God, and ſuch as no creature, how elevated ſoever, can poſſibly be capable of.

The

The Prayer.

MY God, my Creator, who haſt in thy great wiſdom furniſh'd me with deſires too large and vehement for the other perfections of my nature; and haſt thereby made it impoſſible that I ſhould ever be my own end; grant me effectually to conſider the barrenneſs and inſufficiency of my own nature, and how unable I am upon my own ſolitary ſtock, to ſatisfy the importunity of my ſoul; that ſo I may not be tranſported with vain complacencies, nor endeavour to bottom my ſelf upon ſuch a centre, as will moulder away under me, and deceive me. Let me ever weigh my ſelf in a true balance, and be as obſervant of my imperfections, as of my excellencies. Let me be ever thankful for the one, and humble for the other. Whatever elſe I am ignorant of, O grant me a true underſtanding of my ſelf; that I may not to the vanity of my nature, add levity of ſpirit, nor become deſpicable in thy eyes, by being too precious in my own. *Amen, Amen.*

Contemplation III.

That 'tis impoſſible that any other created good ſhould be the end of man.

1. HAVING by the light of contemplation diſcover'd the neceſſity of man's having ſome end, and the utter impoſſibility of his ever being his own end; I am now concern'd to look beyond

beyond the orb of my own perfections, and to conſider, whether the whole latitude of the creation, can afford any good that will terminate the amorous bent of my ſoul, and wherein I may ſweetly and ſecurely reſt, as in my end or centre.

2. And this I am the more induced to enquire into, firſt, becauſe I obſerve that the generality of men, and thoſe ſome of the moſt ſagacious, thinking, and inquiſitive, do purſue many intereſts in this viſible and ſublunary world (which yet is the moſt cheap and inconſiderable part of the creation) with as much fervency, vigour and aſſiduity, as they could poſſibly do, were it the true end of man. So that one would think by the quickneſs of their motion, they were nigh the centre.

3. Secondly, Becauſe I obſerve concerning my ſelf, that there are ſome few things in the world which I love with great paſſion, and delight in with ſomething like ſatisfaction and acquieſcence. Such as are converſation with ſelect friends, or men of harmonical and tunable diſpoſitions; reading of cloſe and fine-wrought diſcourſes, ſolitary walks and gardens, the magnificence of the Heavens, the beauty of the ſpring; and above all, majeſtick and well compoſed muſick. Which laſt, could I enjoy it in its higheſt perfection, and without interruption, would, I am apt to fancy, terminate my deſires, and make me happy; at leaſt, I am well aſſured, I ſhould pity more than I ſhould envy.

4. Thirdly, Becauſe I conſider, that the great Author of nature is brought in by *Moſes*, commending upon a deliberate review, all the works of his hands. That which before the divine incubation was ſolitude and inanity, after the ſpirit had moved upon the waters, he pronounced ſuperlatively good. So very ſuperlatively good, that even the glory of

Solomon

So omon in the judgment of him who was both greater and wiſer than he, was not comparable to one of nature's meaneſt flowers. And if the beauty and variety of the creature was ſo conſiderable, as to merit approbation from him that made it, what is there of our love and complacency that it may not challenge? That which can but pleaſe God, may well be ſuppos'd, able to ſatisfie man: That wherein the Creator delights, the creature, one would think, might fully reſt and acquieſce in.

5. By ſuch conſiderations as theſe, when ſolely attended to, I have been ſometimes almoſt prevail'd upon to think, that there is good enough in the creation of God, if amaſs'd together, and fully enjoy'd, to employ the whole activity of my love, and fix the entire weight of my ſoul. But yet, when I conſider experience, and compare the aſpirations of my nature with the goodneſs of the creation, I am driven to conclude, that altho' the creatures of God (whatever the *Manichees* ſay to the contrary) are all good enough to afford matter for entertainment and praiſe; yet they cannot detain, and give anchorage to the ſoul of man. The motion of the appetite may be ſomewhat reſiſted by created good, and its force a little broken, but it will ſoon ſink through, like a ſtone through a watry *medium*. Some repaſt may be found in the creature; but as for complete ſatisfaction, and termination of deſires, *the ſea ſaith it is not in me, and the depth ſaith it is not in me.* All that God ever did, or ever can make, will prove inſufficient for this purpoſe; and come under that decretory ſentence of the wiſe preacher, *vanity of vanities, all is vanity.*

6. And this is firſt confirm'd to me from experience; and that not my own only, but of all mankind. For as the weight of my affections (as was obſerv'd

obſerv'd in yeſterdays contemplation) is extatical, and inclines to good without my ſelf; ſo does it preſs beyond that which is created too; and conſequently argues, that the creation without me, can no more be my centre, than I can be to my ſelf.

7. For not to inſiſt upon the great emptineſs of fruition, that every flower in this paradiſe of God ſhrinks aſſoon as touch'd; that whatever reverſions and proſpects of happineſs we may have, 'tis yet ſeldom known that any man pronounces himſelf tolerably happy in the preſent; that men are not pleas'd with that themſelves, for which they envy another: Not to inſiſt, I ſay on theſe, and the like, did ever any man, tho' never ſo fortunate in his deſigns, and never ſo well pleas'd at his attainments, find himſelf able to confine his deſires within the ſphere of that good he was poſſes'd of? 'Tis true indeed, he may deſire no more of the ſame; he may have ſo much of riches, as to deſire no more riches; ſo much of honour, as to deſire no more honour; but he cannot have ſo much of any thing, as not ſimply to deſire on farther, That is in ſhort; he may be ſatiated, but not ſatisfy'd.

8. And this we have confirm'd by the ingenious confeſſion of one, who dug as low for his treaſure as ever man did or could; that ranſack'd the whole creation, and ſeem'd to make it his profeſs'd buſineſs, to extract, if poſſible, this divine elixir; not only perhaps as a voluptuary, but as a philoſopher; for experiment and curioſity, as well as for ſenſuality and pleaſure. But what was the iſſue? Why, after the chargeable operation, the deluded chymiſt ſits down, recounts his gains, and finds this to be the ſum of them, that his judgment indeed was inform'd, but not that his deſires were ſatisfy'd: That he had with all his coſt, bought only this piece of wiſdom,

to know the vanity of the creation ſo far, as to give o'er all farther ſearch, and loſe no more time, coſt and labour, in a fruitleſs experiment.

9. And that what this great enquirer after happineſs experimented is every man's caſe, I am farther aſſured, when I contemplate, that the greateſt favourites of fortune, thoſe who have had the world at command, and could enjoy all that is good in it, with almoſt as little trouble as 'twas created, at a words ſpeaking, have yet all along been ſubject to melancholy, eſpecially after ſome notable enjoyment; as the Grecian hero wept when he had conquer'd the world. Now what ſhould the cauſe of this be but that they find themſelves empty in the midſt of their fulneſs; that they deſire farther than they enjoy; that however every ſenſe about them be feaſted to the height, yet there remains a general appetite, that of being happy, which is not ſatisfy'd; and not only ſo, but becauſe they ſuſpect withal (as indeed they have very good reaſon, having taſted the utmoſt of natures entertainment) that it never ſhall be. And from this deſire and deſpair, proceeds their melancholy and dejection of ſpirit. And to this purpoſe, I call to mind a very remarkable ſtory recorded by *Euſebius Nierembergius*, in his book *de arte voluntatis*, concerning an eaſtern Emperor, who was minded to try the ſame experiment upon his ſon, as *Solomon* did upon himſelf; and to ſee how far the accommodations of life, might go towards true felicity. He accordingly, train'd him up from his infancy in magnificent apartments, ſtudiouſly remov'd from him all pitiable objects, that he might not have ſo much as a notion of miſery, humour'd him in every punctilio, and furniſh'd him with whatſoever he either did wiſh for, or might be ſuppos'd to take pleaſure in;

Lib. 6. p. 537.

in; till at length, the unfortunately happy young man, obſerving himſelf to be ſtill in deſires, and that in a ſtate of all poſſible worldly affluence, could no longer flatter himſelf with imaginary proſpects, but concluded, that no condition would ever mend the matter; and ſo fell into extreme melancholy and deſpair.

10. Now I conſider, that if mean perſons only were ſubject to melancholy, the deſire from whence it proceeded might be accounted for another way; namely, from their not having ſo much of created good, as if poſſeſs'd, might be thought ſufficient to ſatisfie. But when men that ſit on the top of fortune's wheel, and drink at the head fountains of nature are yet liable to melancholy dejections, 'tis to me a plain argument, that the cauſe of this melancholy, their deſires, proceeds from a deficiency in the things themſelves; not that they are ſtraitned in their poſſeſſions, but that the things which they poſſeſs, are weigh'd in the balance, and found wanting.

11. Thus far is this truth atteſted to by experience. But I am yet farther aſſured of it, when I compare the aſpirations of my nature with the goodneſs of the creation; for when I do ſo, I find they are very diſproportionate. It may paſs for good mythology to inquire, what is the ſtrongeſt thing, what the wiſeſt, and what the greateſt; Concerning which it may be thus determin'd, that the ſtrongeſt thing is neceſſity, the wiſeſt is time, and the greateſt is the heart of man. And well may that be call'd the greateſt thing, whoſe capacity can take in the whole creation, and yet like the immence ſpace, remain ſtill an unrepleniſh'd emptineſs.

12. For my deſires are circumſcribed with no limits, but run on indefinitely to all poſſible good. But now the good of the creation, like the creation it ſelf, is bounded; the very notion of a creature

involving imperfection, as much as body does circumſcription and termination. Hence therefore I conclude, that not only all the good of the creation though collected together into extract and ſpirit by the chymiſtry of its great author, would be inſufficient to afford me perfect ſatisfaction; but that 'tis not in the power of him that is omnipotent, to create any good that can ſatisfie my deſires, any more than to create a body that ſhall fill immenſe ſpace: And conſequently, that 'tis impoſſible that any created good ſhould be the end of man. If againſt all this it be objected, that that may be the end of man, which can quiet his will, and fill its capacity. But that which is finite may be ſufficient to do this, ſince the capacity of the will is finite, and a finite object is proportionable to a finite capacity, ſo as to be able to fill it. To this I anſwer, that the capacity of the will is indeed ſubjectively finite, as every thing in man is, being a created being. But yet however at the ſame time it is objectively infinite, as tending to the fruition of an infinite good. For as the object of the underſtanding is being, according to the common reaſon of being; ſo the object of the will is good according to the common reaſon of good. And therefore (as an acute ſchool-man remarks) nothing can ſimply terminate the capacity of the underſtanding and will objectively, unleſs it has in ſome manner the reaſon of all being, and of all good. And whatever is ſo is infinite. See *Durandus*, *Lib.* 1 *Diſtinct.* 1 *Qu.* 2.

The Prayer.

MY God, my creator, who haſt made all things for the preſent entertainment, but nothing for the end of man; grant I may ever juſtly diſcern between

between the goodneſs and the vanity of thy creatures, that I may not either by not heeding to the former, become unthankful, or by not heeding to the latter, become idolatrous. O keep this conviction ſtill awake in me, how inſufficient all created good is towards true felicity; that I may not any longer with the miſtaken votaries of thy Son's ſepulchre, ſeek the living among the dead, light in the regions of darkneſs; and that I may no longer labour for that which is not bread. Let me not add care, labour and toil to the miſery of unquench'd thirſts, and unſatisfy'd deſires; but ſince I am certain never to find reſt in the boſom of thy creation, grant I may be ſo wiſe at leaſt, as not to weary my ſelf more in the fruitleſs purſuit of it. Withdraw, I beſeech thee, my expectations of happineſs from all the works of thy hands; and fix them there only, where there is no diſappointment or deluſion, even in the true centre of all deſire; for the ſake of thy tender compaſſions. *Amen.*

CONTEMPLATION IV.

That God who is the author of man, is likewiſe his true end and centre.

1. WHEN I contemplate the nature of man, and conſider how the deſire of happineſs is interwoven with it; that *love is ſtrong as death, and importunate as the grave*; that there is a vehement and conſtant verticity in the ſoul towards perfect good, which begins as ſoon, and is as immortal as her ſelf; and withal, how diſproportionately this

amorous diſpoſition of thee ſoul is gratify'd by any entertainment, whether domeſtick or foreign, ſhe can meet with in the circle of created good: I find it neceſſary to conclude, that the great being who commanded me to exiſt, is ſo every way perfect and all-ſufficient, as to anſwer that vaſt ſtock of deſires our natures come fraught withal into the world; ſince otherwiſe (which is abſurd to ſuppoſe) of all the creatures in it, man would be the moſt miſerable.

2. For what man of thoughts is there, who after a through conviction, that he can neither get rid of his deſires, nor among the proviſions of nature have them fully gratify'd, would not immediately throw up his title to immortality, if he thought himſelf arriv'd to the meridian of his happineſs, and and that he muſt never expect to be in a better condition than he is? For to have his deſires enlarg'd, and nothing to ſatisfie them, is ſuch a contrivance for miſery, that 'tis thought by ſome, to be the portion of hell, and to make up the very formality of damnation.

3. But to our great conſolation, 'tis wholly in our own power, whether it ſhall be always ſo with us, or no. There is a being, whoſe perfections are anſwerable to our deſires. He that made us, can ſatisfie every appetite he has planted in us; and he that is happy in reflecting upon himſelf, can make us ſo too, by the direct view of his glory. He can entertain all our faculties; our underſtandings, as he is truth; and our wills, as he is goodneſs; and that in the higheſt degree, becauſe he is infinite in both. He can more than employ all our powers in their utmoſt elevation; for he is every way perfect, and all-ſufficient, yea he is altogether lovely.

4. But

4. But to evince more particularly and distinctly, that God is the true end of man, I shall consider, whether the conditions requisite to his being so are found in him. Now these can be no other than these two in general. *1st*, that he be absolutely good and perfect in himself, so as to be able to fill and satisfie the whole capacity of our desires; and *2dly*. that he be willing that man shall partake of this his transcendent fulness, so as actually one time or other to fix the weight of his appetite, and become his centre. If therefore these two conditions are found in God, he has all that is requisite to make him our end. And that they are, is now to be made appear.

5. First then, That God is absolutely good and perfect in himself, so as to be able to fill and satisfie the whole capacity of our desires. There are several topicks in the metaphysicks from whence I might infer this, but I shall confine my present speculation to this one, that God is the first being. This is a very reasonable *postulatum*; it being too obvious to need any proof, that there is a first being, or, that by the first being is meant God. It remains therefore, that we try what advantage may be made of it.

6. When therefore I consider God as the first being, I am from thence in the first place, led to conclude, that he has eminently, and in a most excellent manner in himself, all kinds and degrees of perfection, that exist loosely and separately in all second beings. And that, not only because the effect cannot possibly exceed the virtue of the cause, any more than it can proceed from no cause, (which is the ground *Cartesius* builds upon, when he proves the existence of God from the objective reality of his idea) but because I farther observe, that in the scale

of being all aſcenſion is by addition, and, that what is diſpers'd in the inferior, is collected, and that after a more excellent manner, in the ſuperior. Thus in vegetables there is bare life; in ſenſitives, vegetative life, and ſenſe; in rationals, vegetative life, ſenſe and reaſon; and all this either formally or eminently with intelligence in Angels. And ſince there is ſuch an harmonical ſubordination among ſecond beings, ſo that the ſuperior contains all the perfection of the inferior, with a peculiar excellence of its own ſuperadded; I think I have fair grounds to conclude, that the abſolutely firſt being has in his rich eſſence, all the ſcattered excellencies of the ſubordinate ones, in a more perfect manner than they themſelves have, with ſome peculiar excellence of his own beſides.

7. Now tho' a being thus accumulatively perfect and excellent, would be beyond all conception, great and glorious, and would employ an eternity, in contemplation and love; we have yet ſeen but an arm of this ſea of beauty, and been enlightned only with the back-parts of his glory. For if God be the firſt being, as is here ſuppoſed, I may farther conclude, that he is alſo the firſt good: (good and being being convertible, and every thing having ſo much good in it as it has of entity, and no more) and if he be the firſt good, I cannot ſee how this concluſion can be avoided, that he is infinitely good.

8. For I conſider, that the firſt good can have no cauſe of that goodneſs which it has: otherwiſe it being neceſſary that the cauſe of good ſhould be good, it would not be the firſt. And if the firſt good can have no cauſe of its gooodneſs, it can likewiſe have no cauſe of the termination of it; ſince what has no cauſe abſolutely and ſimply, cannot have a cauſe in any particular reſpect; and if it has

no

no cauſe of its termination, it muſt neceſſarily be interminate or infinite, and conſequently God, who is the firſt good, is infinitely good.

9. And now breath a while, my ſoul; and conſider what a rich mine of good thou haſt ſprung. Thou haſt found out a being, who is not only the ideal as well as efficient cauſe of all created excellence; but who is infinitely good and excellent. This is he whoſe great perfection not only contains and infinitely exceeds, but eclipſes, and quite extinguiſhes all the beauty of the creature; ſo that (as the expreſs image of this great excellence informs us) *there is none good, but one, which is God.* This is he whoſe good is incomprehenſible by the underſtanding, and inexhauſtible by the will and affections of man. This is the celebrated Αὐτάρκεια of *Ariſtotle*, the ἰδέα τῦ Ἀγαθῦ of *Plato*, and the *El Shaddai* of the *Hebrews*. This is the great πᾶν πλήρωμα, the univerſal plenitude, whoſe happineſs is conſummated within his own circle; who ſupports himſelf upon the baſis of his own all-ſufficiency, and is his own end and centre.

10. And now what is there more requiſite to qualifie him for being mine alſo but this only, that he be willing that man ſhall partake of this his tranſcendent fulneſs, ſo as actually one time or other to fix the weight of his appetite; which was the ſecond condition.

11. And that this is alſo found in God, I think I have ſufficient aſſurance from theſe two things; the abſolute perfection of his nature; and thoſe expreſs revelations he has made of his will, as to this particular. As for the nature of God, it involves, as in notion and conception, ſo likewiſe in truth and reality, (as was above demonſtrated) abſolute and infinite perfection; and conſequently, includes

a beneficent and communicative diſpoſition; this being a perfection.

12. Nor does the ſuperlative eminency of the divine nature, only argue him to be communicative, but to be the moſt communicative and ſelf-diffuſive of all beings. For, as all kinds, ſo all degrees of excellency muſt of neceſſity be included in a being abſolutely and infinitely perfect, ſuch as God is. Whence it will alſo follow, that he is not only the moſt communicative of all beings, but that he will alſo communicate himſelf: and not only ſo, but in ſuch an ample and liberal meaſure too, as entirely to ſatisfie the moſt aſpiring and reaching appetite of man; ſince otherwiſe, ſome degrees of communicativeneſs, and conſequently, of excellence, would be wanting; which is abſurd to ſuppoſe in a being abſolutely perfect. Eſpecially conſidering, that thoſe importunate deſires of human nature are of his own planting; which as it firmly aſſures us of his being able, ſo is it no leſs cogent an argument for his being willing to be our centre; it being incredible, that ſo infinite an excellence ſhould plant in man ſuch deſires, as either he could not, or would not ſatisfie.

13. And of this willingneſs of God that man ſhould partake of his fulneſs, ſo far as to bottom upon it, and acquieſce in it; there is yet farther aſſurance from many expreſs revelations of his good pleaſure to that purpoſe. Which conſiſt of two kinds, expreſs words, wherein he profeſſes himſelf paſſionately deſirous of the ſalvation and happineſs of man; and two very notable and ſignal acts; namely, the conſigning to the world a copy of his will, as a chart to direct us to the true haven of reſt and anchorage; and the ſending his beloved Son from the manſions of glory, to diſlodge the angry guardian

dian of paradiſe, and re-open for us an entrance into the joy of our Lord. By both which kinds of revelation he has given us the higheſt aſſurance imaginable, that he deſigns not to ingroſs and monopolize the perfections of his rich eſſence; but that he is heartily willing to admit man to a participation of that excellent good, wherein he himſelf is happy; to give him (as the pſalmiſt expreſſes it) *everlaſting felicity, and make him glad with the joy of his countenance.*

14. To which conſiderations I might farther add, that this excellent communicativeneſs of the divine nature is typically repreſented, and myſteriouſly exemplify'd by the *Porphyrian* ſcale of being. For as there the lower degrees are determin'd and contracted, but the higher more common and extenſive, ſo is it in the real ſcale of being. The inferior, which are either matter, or complicated and twiſted with matter, are more contracted, narrow, ſelfiſh and illiberal; but the ſuperior, as they are leſs immers'd in, and allay'd with matter, ſo are they more open, diffuſive and free. For indeed, all contraction and confinement is from matter; but 'tis form and ſpirit that is the root of all freeneſs and enlargement. And thus we ſee in bodies; the more of kin they are to ſpirit in ſubtilty and refinement, the more ſpreading are they and ſelf-diffuſive. Whereupon light, which of all bodies is neareſt ally'd to ſpirit, is alſo moſt diffuſive and ſelf-communicative. God therefore, who is at the very top of all being, who is an abſolute, mere and ſpiritual act, and who laſtly, is ſuch a pure light, as in which there is no darkneſs at all, muſt needs be infinitely ſelf-imparting and communicative; and conſequently, wants nothing to qualifie him to be the true end and centre of man.

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The Prayer.

MY God, my happineſs, who art as well the end as the author of my being; who haſt more perfection than I have deſire, and art alſo ſeriouſly willing to quench my great thirſt, in the ocean of thy perfection; I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory. Withdraw thy hand from the cliſt of the rock, and remove the bounds from the mount of thy preſence, that I may ſee thee as thou art face to face, and ever dwell in the light of thy beauty. I have long dwelt with vanity and emptineſs, and have made my ſelf weary in the purſuit of reſt. O let me not fail at laſt, after my many wandrings and diſappointments, to be taken up into this true and only ark of repoſe and ſecurity, where I may for ever reſt, and for ever bleſs the author of my happineſs. In the mean time ſtrike, I beſeech thee, my ſoul with ſuch lively and raviſhing apprehenſions of thy excellencies, ſuch bright irradiations of thy divine light, that I may ſee enough to love thee infinitely, to depend on thee for my happineſs entirely, to live upon holy hopes and comfortable expectations, and to bear up my ſpirit under the greateſt aridities and dejections with the delightful proſpect of thy glories. O let me ſit down under this thy ſhadow with great delight, till the fruit of the tree of life ſhall be ſweet to my taſte. Let me ſtay and entertain my longing ſoul with the contemplation of thy beauty, till thou ſhalt condeſcend to *kiſs me with the kiſſes of thy mouth*, till thou ſhalt bring me into thy banquetting-houſe, where viſion ſhall be the ſupport of my ſpirit, and thy banner over me ſhall be love. Grant this, O my God, my happineſs, for the ſake of thy great love, and of the Son of thy love, *Chriſt Jeſus*. Amen.

CONTEMPLATION V.

Two Corollaries hence deduc'd: The firſt whereof is; that God is therefore to be loved with all poſſible application and elevation of ſpirit, with all the heart, ſoul and mind.

1. AMong the perfections of humane nature, the faculty of deſiring or reaching out after agreeable objects, is not the leaſt conſiderable; and 'tis the peculiar glory of man to be an amorous, as well as a rational being. For by this he ſupplies the defects of his nature, not only enjoys the good he unites with, but digeſts it as it were into himſelf, and makes it his own; and relieves his domeſtick poverty by foreign negotiation.

2. But tho' the pathetick part of man be one of the nobleſt perfections he is furniſh'd with, yet ſo generally faulty are we in the due applications and direction of this noble faculty, that to be pathetically and amorouſly diſpos'd, is look'd upon by ſome not as a perfection, but as a diſeaſe of the ſoul, and is condemn'd by a whole order of men, as inconſiſtent with the character of wiſdom, according to that ſtoical aphoriſm, *amare ſimul & ſapere ipſi Jovi non datur.*

3. But certainly, *Eve* was intended as a help for *Adam*, tho' in the event ſhe prov'd the inſtrument of his ſeduction; and our paſſions were given us to perfect and accompliſh our natures, tho' by accidental miſapplications to unworthy objects, they may

may turn to our degradation and diſhonour. We may indeed be debaſed, as well as innobled by them; but then the fault is not in the large ſails, but in the ill conduct of the pilot, if our veſſel miſs the haven. The tide of our love can never run too high, provided it take a right channel; our paſſion then will be our higheſt wiſdom: and he was no ſtoick that ſaid, *As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God,* Pſal. 42. And again, *My ſoul is athirſt for God.* And again, *My ſoul breaketh out for fervent deſire.* And again, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee.* Pſal. cxix. Pſal. xxiii. 24.

4. Being therefore from the foregoing periods arrived to this concluſion, that God is the true end and centre of man, I think I ought now to looſe the reins of my affections, to unbay the current of my paſſion, and love on without any other boundary or meaſure, than what is ſet me by the finiteneſs of my natural powers.

5. 'Tis true indeed, whenever we turn the edge of our deſire towards any created good, 'tis prudence as well as religion, to uſe caution and moderation, to gage the point of our affections, leſt it run too far; there being ſo much emptineſs in the enjoyment, and ſo much hazard in the poſſeſſion. When we venture to lean upon ſuch objects, we are like men that walk upon a quagmire, and therefore ſhould tread as lightly as we can, leſt it give way and ſink under us.

6. But how excellent a virtue ſoever moderation may be in our concernments with other objects, we have nothing to do with it in the love of that being who is our end and centre. There is here, danger but of one extream; and that is, of the defect. We

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can love but finitely, when we have lov'd our utmoſt; and what is that to him who is infinitely lovely? Since therefore our moſt liberal proportions will be infinitely ſhort and ſcanty, we ought not ſure, to give new retrenchments to our love, and cut it yet ſhorter by frugal limitations.

7. For if God be our end and centre, he muſt neceſſarily have all that good in him which we can poſſibly deſire; and if ſo, then he is able to ſtay and ſatisfie all our love; and if ſo, then nothing ſo reaſonable, as that he ſhould have it all. We are therefore to love him with all poſſible application and elevation of ſpirit, with all the heart, ſoul and mind. We ſhould collect and concentre all the rays of our love into this one point, and lean towards God with the whole weight of our ſoul, as all that is ponderous in nature, tends with its whole weight toward the centre. And this we ſhould do as directly as may be, with as little warping and declenſion toward the creature as is poſſible. For ſo alſo 'tis to be obſerv'd in nature, that not only all weight or *pondus* tends toward the centre, but that alſo it moves thither as nigh as it can, in a direct and perpendicular line.

The Prayer.

MY God, my happineſs, *who art fairer than the children of Men*, and who thy ſelf art very love, as well as altogether lovely, *draw me and I will run after thee.* O wind up my ſoul to the higheſt pitch of love that my faculties will bear, and let me never alienate any degree of that noble paſſion from thee its only due object. Quench in me all terrene fires and ſenſual reliſhes, and do thou wound

wound me deep, and ſtrike me through with the arrows of a divine paſſion, that as thou art all beauty and perfection, ſo I may be all love and devotion. *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready* for a burnt-offering; ſend down then an holy fire from above to kindle the ſacrifice, and do thou continually fan and keep alive, and clarifie the flame, that I may be ever aſcending up to thee, in devout breathings, and pious aſpirations, till at length I aſcend in ſpirit to the element of love, where I ſhall know thee more clearly, and love thee more ſeraphically, and receive thoſe peculiar coronets of glory thou haſt reſerv'd for thoſe that eminently love thee. *Amen.*

CONTEMPLATION VI.

The Second Corollary: That therefore God is ultimately to be referred to in all our actions; and that he is not to be uſed by us, but enjoyed.

1. AS there is nothing of greater and more univerſal moment to the regular ordination of human life, than rightly to accommodate the means and the end, and to make them uniform and ſymbolical; ſo is there nothing wherein men are more univerſally peccant and defective, and that not only in practice, but alſo in notion and theory.

2. For although to do an ill action for a good end, and to do a good action for an ill end, are generally acknowledg'd alike criminal; yet concerning this latter,

latter, 'tis obſervable, that men uſually think the morality of their actions ſufficiently ſecured, if the end propoſed be not in its own nature ſpecifically evil. Whereas indeed, there is yet another way whereby an end may become evil, namely, by being reſted in, when 'tis not the laſt, without any farther reſpect or reference. By this undue and ill-plac'd acquieſcence, an end that is otherwiſe in its own intrinſick nature good, upon the whole commences evil. For tho' it be good to be choſen, it is yet ill to be reſted in.

3. For indeed 'tis againſt the order and œconomy of things, as well as againſt the perfection of religion, that any end ſhould be ultimately reſted in, but what is truly the laſt. Now the laſt end of action, can be no other than that which is the laſt end of the will, which is, the ſpring of action. This therefore being God, (as appears from what I have already contemplated) it follows, that he ought to be the ultimate end of all our actions; that we ought not in any of our motions to ſtop ſhort of this centre, but in all our actions, to make a farther reference, either actual or habitual; and according to that of the Apoſtle, *Whether we eat or drink, to do all to the glory of God.*

4. For what can be more abſurd and incongruous, than to turn the means into the end, and the end into the means; to enjoy what ought to be only uſed, and to uſe what ought to be enjoyed? God is our laſt end, and therefore muſt not be deſired for any thing but himſelf, nor uſed as a means to accompliſh any other deſign. Which alſo, concludes againſt all thoſe who make religion a point of ſecular intereſt, and a tool of State-policy, whereas that ought to preſcribe, and not to receive meaſures from any human affairs.

The Prayer.

MY God, my happineſs, who art the laſt end of my deſires, the very utmoſt of all perfection, and beyond whom there is no good; be thou the laſt end of my actions too, and let them all meet and unite in thee, as lines in their centre. Grant, I may ſet thee before me in all my thoughts, words and actions; let my eye of contemplation be always open; and whatever intermedial deſigns I may have, let my laſt aim be thy glory. And, O let me never be ſo low ſunk, baſe and wicked, as to make religion an inſtrument of worldly policy, nor to diſhonour thee and my own ſoul, by ſuch a mercenary piety. But do thou always poſſeſs my mind with ſuch a due value for thy infinite excellency, that I may refer all things to thee, and thee and thine to nothing, but love and embrace thee for thy own ſelf, who in thy ſelf alone art altogether lovely. *Amen, Amen.*

A Discourse upon *Rom.* xii. 3.

------Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the meaſure of faith.

1. THere is nothing wherein men are ſo much divided from one another, as in opinions; and nothing wherein they more unanimouſly conſpire,

ſpire, than in thinking well of themſelves. This is a humour of ſo catholick a ſtamp, and univerſal empire, that it may ſeem to challenge a place among thoſe elements of our conſtitution, thoſe eſſentials of our nature which run throughout the whole kind, and are participated by every individual. For ſhould a man *take the wings of the morning* and travel with the ſun round the terreſtrial globe, he would hardly find a man either of a judgment ſo difficult to be pleas'd, or of accompliſhment ſo little to recommend him, that was not notwithſtanding ſufficiently in love with himſelf, however he might diſlike every thing elſe about him; and without queſtion, that arrogant and peeviſh Mathematician who charged the grand Architect with want of skill in the mechaniſm of the World, thought he had play'd the artiſt well enough in himſelf; and as to the harmony of his own frame, acquitted the Geometry of his Maker.

2. And as men are thus naturally apt to think well of themſelves in general, ſo there is nothing wherein they indulge this humour more, than in the opinion they have of the goods of the mind; and among theſe, there is none which has ſo great a ſhare of their partiality, as their intellectual faculty. The deſire of knowledge is not more natural, than the conceit that we are already furniſh'd with a conſiderable meaſure of it; and tho' a particular ſect were characteriz'd by that appellation, yet all mankind are in reality *Gnoſticks*. For (as 'tis ingeniouſly obſerv'd by the excellent *Carteſius*) nothing is more equally diſtributed among men than the intellectual talent, wherewith every one fancies himſelf ſo abundantly ſtock'd, that even thoſe who have the moſt unſatiable de-

Diſſert. de Method. p. 1.

ſires, and whom providence could not ſatisfie in any one thing elſe, are notwithſtanding, as to this diſpenſation of Heaven, well enough content, complain not of the dull planet that influenc'd their nativity, or wiſh their minds more richly endow'd than they are. And altho' there are a generation of men who uſe to be very eloquent in ſetting out the degeneracy of human nature in general, and particularly in decyphering the ſhortneſs of our intellectual ſight, and the defects of our now diminiſh'd underſtanding, yet ſhould a man take them at their word, and apply that verdict to themſelves in particular, which they ſo freely beſtow upon the whole ſpecies, I dare not undertake that he ſhall not provoke their reſentment: And perhaps notwithſtanding the liberal, tho' otherwiſe juſt complaints of the corruption of human nature, could all mankind lay a true claim to that eſtimate which ſome paſs upon themſelves, there would be little or no difference betwixt laps'd and perfect humanity; and God might again review his image with paternal complacency, and ſtill pronounce it good.

3. Nor is it at all to be wonder'd, that ſelf-conceitedneſs ſhould be of ſuch an unlimited and tranſcendental nature, as to run through all ſorts and claſſes of men, ſince the cauſe of it, ſelf-love, has ſuch an univerſal juriſdiction in our hearts. 'Tis moſt natural and neceſſary for every man (and indeed for every intelligent being) to be a lover of himſelf; and to covet whatſoever any way tends to the perfection of his nature. And as 'tis neceſſary for every man to be thus affected towards himſelf, ſo is this the only diſpoſition of mind wherein man acts with conſtancy and uniformity. Our other paſſions have ſometimes their total intermiſſions, and at beſt their increaſes and decreaſes;

ſes; but this is always at full, and ſtands drawn out to the utmoſt ſtretch of its capacity. No man loves himſelf more at one time than at another, and that becauſe he always loves himſelf in the higheſt degree that is poſſible. More than all good he cannot wiſh to himſelf, and leſs than all he will not; nay, I had almoſt pronouc'd it impoſſible for Omnipotence it ſelf, which ſtays the proud waves of the ocean, and blocks up its violent efforts with bars and doors, to ſay unto this paſſion, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come but no farther*, Job xxxviii. 10. or to ſet any other bounds to it beſides thoſe of all poſſible good.

4. Now man being ſuch an infinite lover of himſelf, is eaſily brought to believe that he is really maſter of many of thoſe excellencies and perfections which he ſo paſſionately wiſhes among the inventory of his poſſeſſions. For there is this notorious difference betwixt ſelf-love and the love of others, that whereas the love of others ſuppoſes an opinion of their excellency, the love of our ſelves begets it. We love others becauſe we think well of them, but (ſo prepoſterous is the method of ſelf-love) we think well of our ſelves becauſe we firſt love our ſelves. So that now upon the whole, conſidering how neceſſarily and vehemently every man is carried on to the love of himſelf, and what a natural product ſelf-conceit is of ſelf-love, 'tis much to be fear'd, that as we cannot ſet any bounds to the love of our ſelves, ſo we ſhall hardly ſet due ones to our opinions of our ſelves, and conſequently, the moſt mortify'd and reſign'd man of us all, has no reaſon to think himſelf unconcern'd in this admonition of the Apoſtle, ——*Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly,*

according as God hath dealt to every man the meaſure of faith.

5. 'Tis ſuppoſed that the Apoſtle in theſe words, had reſpect to the then prevailing hereſie of the *Gnoſticks*, a ſort of men that pretended to great heights of divine knowledge; and upon that preſumption grew ſo haughty and inſolent, as to *deſpiſe dominions, and ſpeak evil of dignities*; and withal ſo careleſs and ſecure, as to *defile the fleſh*, and indulge themſelves in all manner of ſenſuality; as you may ſee their character in the Epiſtle of St. *Jude*. Nay, of ſuch turbulent ungovernable principles, and profligate manners were theſe men, that ſome of the learned (and particularly an eminent Divine of our own church) have adventured to write upon their foreheads Myſtery, and to place them in the chair of Antichriſt. As an antidote therefore againſt this poiſon, the Apoſtle (2 *Cor.* xii. 7) who through the *abundance of Revelation* had himſelf been in danger of being *exalted above meaſure*, and experimentally knew how prone human nature is to ſwell and plume upon a conceit of its own excellencies, thought it expedient to adviſe his charge at *Rome* (the place which *Simon Magus*, the author of that ſect had made choice of to be the ſcene of his magical operations) to moderate and ſober thoughts of themſelves; and being to teach them a leſſon of humility, he modeſtly uſhers it in with a preface of his commiſſion and authority. *For I ſay* (ſays he) *through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himſelf more highly*, &c.

Dr. *Hammond.*

6. The diſcourſe which I deſign upon theſe words ſhall be compriſed within theſe limits.

Firſt,

Firſt, I obſerve, that we are not at our own liberty, to entertain what opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves; but that we ought to regulate them by ſome ſtandard. Which I collect from the former part of the text. *Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly.*

7. Secondly, I obſerve, that the ſtandard whereby we are to regulate our opinions concerning our ſelves, are thoſe excellencies and perfections which we are really endow'd with; which I collect from the latter part of the text, *According as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of faith.*

8. And in the third place, I ſhall conſider the abſurdities and ill conſequences of tranſgreſſing this ſtandard; whereby it ſhall appear how highly reaſonable this admonition of the Apoſtle is; and ſo conclude with a practical application of the whole in relation to our ſelves, and the preſent occaſion.

9. I begin with the firſt propoſition, that we are not at our own liberty to entertain what opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves; but that we ought to regulate them by ſome ſtandard.

10. The acts of the underſtanding may be thought as free from all law, as the acts of the will are from all neceſſity. And accordingly, men may fancy they have a toleration to abound in their own ſenſe, and (provided their actions be conformable to the rule) to think what they pleaſe. Now ſince a man cannot be accountable for an opinion of himſelf in particular, unleſs it be firſt granted that he is under a law, as to the acts of his underſtanding in general, before I can proceed any farther, I find it neceſſary to lay down this preparatory poſition, that we are under an obligation as to the acts of our underſtanding, or (which is all one) that we are accountable for them. Nay, perhaps I may

venture higher, and affirm, that the underſtanding is not only under obligation, but that 'tis the primary and immediate ſubject of it. For that muſt be the primary and immediate ſubject of all obligation which is ſo of liberty. Now that this cannot be the will, I ſuppoſe will be acknowledg'd a clear conſequence, if the will neceſſarily follows the practical dictate of the underſtanding. And that it does ſo, ſeems not to be denied.

11. 'Tis an unqueſtionable Axiom, that the object of the will is apparent good: Now apparent good in other words, is that which is apprehended or judg'd to be good; and if ſo, then it follows, that the will cannot but conform to the dictate of the underſtanding; becauſe otherwiſe, ſomething might be the object of the will that is not apprehended good; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. In ſhort, the will (as *Aquinas* has well expreſſed it) is the concluſion of an operative ſyllogiſm; and follows as neceſſarily from the dictate of the underſtanding, as any other concluſion does from its premiſſes; and conſequently, cannot be the immediate ſubject of liberty; and conſequently, not of obligation,

12. But then are we not involv'd in the ſame difficulty as to the underſtanding? Does not that act with equal (if not more) neceſſity than the will? So I know it is ordinarily taught. But if this be abſolutely and univerſally true, it will not be eaſy to ſalve the notion of morality, or religion. For ſince 'tis evident, both by reaſon, and from experimental reflection, that the will neceſſarily acts in conformity to the dictates of the underſtanding, if thoſe very dictates are alſo wholly and altogether neceſſary, there can be no ſuch thing as a πὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, the man is bound hand and foot, has nothing left

left whereby to render him a moral agent, to qualifie him for law or obligation, virtue or vice, reward or puniſhment. But theſe are abſurdities not to be endur'd; and therefore I conclude, according to the rules of right reaſoning, the principle from which they flow to be ſo too.

13. To clear up then the whole difficulty with as much brevity and perſpicuity as in a matter of this intricacy is poſſible, I ſhall no longer conſider the underſtanding and will as faculties really diſtinct from the ſoul, but that the ſoul does immediately underſtand and will by it ſelf, without the intervention of any faculty whatſoever. And that for this reaſon, becauſe in the contrary hypotheſis, either judgment muſt be aſcribed to the will, and then the will immediately commences underſtanding, or the aſſent of the will muſt be blind, brutiſh, and accountable; both which are as great abſurdities as they are true conſequences. This being premiſed, I grant, that as the ſoul neceſſarily wills as ſhe underſtands, ſo likewiſe does ſhe neceſſarily underſtand as the object appears. And thus far our ſight terminates in fatality, and neceſſity bounds our horizon. That then that muſt give us a proſpect beyond it, ſeems to be this, that altho' the ſoul neceſſarily underſtands or judges according to the appearance of things, yet that things ſhould ſo appear (unleſs it be in propoſitions that are ſelf-evident, as that the whole is greater than any one part, or the like) is not alike neceſſary, but depends upon the degrees of advertency or attention, which the ſoul uſes; and which to uſe, either more or leſs, is fully and immediately in her own power. And this indifferency of the ſoul, as to attending or not attending, perhaps will be found to be the only τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, the bottom and foundation into which the

the morality of every action muſt be at length reſolv'd. For a farther illuſtration of which hypotheſis, let us apply it to a particular caſe, and try how well it will anſwer the *Phænomena*. In the caſe then of martyrdom, I look upon ſin as an evil; and not only ſo, but (while I attend fully to its nature) the greateſt of evils. And as long as I continue this judgment, 'tis utterly impoſſible I ſhould commit it; there being according to my preſent apprehenſion, no greater evil for the declining of which I ſhould think it eligible. But now the evil of pain being preſented before me, and I not ſufficiently attending to the evil of ſin, this latter appears to be the leſſer evil of the too; and I accordingly *pro hic & nunc*, ſo pronounce it; and in conformity to that judgment neceſſarily chuſe it. But becauſe 'twas abſolutely in my power to have attended more heedfully, there was liberty in the principle, the miſtake which influenc'd the action was vincible; and conſequently, the action it ſelf imputable. This hypotheſis, tho' not wholly without difficulty, ſeems yet the more recommendable to our approbation as a refuge from thoſe abſurdities which attend the ordinary ſolutions. The ſum is according to this account, the morality of human actions are at length reſolv'd into an immediate power the ſoul has of attending or not attending to what is propoſed to her. And if this be true, we are not only under obligation as to the acts of the underſtanding, but all obligation will begin there.

14. But whether the underſtanding be the root of liberty, and ſo the primary ſubject of obligation or no (which I propoſe rather as an hypotheſis to be farther conſider'd, than as an abſolute aſſertion) yet that we are under obligation as to the acts of

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our underſtanding, I think is very plain upon theſe two accounts. Firſt, becauſe the acts of our underſtanding are very much in our power. For tho' we cannot think of things otherwiſe than they appear to us, and oftentimes have it as little in our power to alter that appearance (as in things that are extremely clear and evident) yet there are many caſes again wherein things will appear differently to us, and ſo we may conceive otherwiſe of them, according to the different degree of attention which we beſtow upon them. And ſo we may be convinc'd of the falſhood of ſome things which we took before for truths, and of the truth of other things which we look'd upon before as falſe and abſurd, or elſe we ſhould not have it in our power to become wiſer. Secondly, becauſe the acts of our underſtanding do very much influence the will; which as it follows the other neceſſarily in all its practical dictates as to this or that particular action, ſo it is very apt to be inclin'd and detirmined by the general thoughts and ſentiments of the other, whoſe immediate light is its rule, and whoſe general notions are its byaſs. And therefore it cannot be imagin'd that that part of the mind ſhould be wholly at our liberty, and unreſtrain'd by any law, upon wh'ch our practice ſo much depends.

15. Having thus clear'd the way by the proof of this preparatory poſition, that we are under obligation as to the acts of the underſtanding in general. I may now proceed to conſider, that our opinion of our ſelves, is one of thoſe acts of the underſtanding which are ſubject to law; or in other terms, that we are not at our own liberty to entertain what opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves, but that we ought to regulate them by ſome ſtandard. Now the general reaſon of this is, becauſe

cauſe 'tis of great moment and influence in relation to our practice, what opinion we entertain concerning our ſelves. Indeed, there are many acts of the underſtanding which tho' originally free, yet fall under no obligation by reaſon of the indifferency of the matter; as in things of pure and naked ſpeculation. Theſe are the unforbidden trees of the garden; and here we may let looſe the reins, and indulge our thoughts the full ſcope. Thus there is no danger of hereſie in aſſerting or denying the *Antipodes*; nor is orthodoxy concern'd, whether the moon be habitable. But although to miſtake a ſtar be of no conſequence to the theoriſt that ſits immur'd in his ſtudy, yet it may be to the pilot, that is to ſteer his courſe by it. There are other things which have a practical aſpect; and here 'tis not indifferent what we think, becauſe 'tis not indifferent what we do. Now among theſe the opinion of our ſelves is to be reckon'd, as having a great influence upon our well or ill demeaning our ſelves reſpectively; as will more minutely and particularly appear, when we come in the third and laſt place, to conſider the abſurdities and ill conſequences of tranſgreſſing the ſtandard preſcribed; and therefore I ſhall defer the farther proſecution of it till then; and in the mean while, proceed to the ſecond obſervable, namely,

That the ſtandard whereby we are to regulate our opinions concerning our ſelves, are thoſe excellencies and perfections which we are really endow'd with. Which is collected from theſe words, *according as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of faith.*

16. In the former part of the text there was indeed a reſtraint laid upon our opinions concerning our ſelves; but it was general only, and indefinite.

But

But here the ground is meaſured out, and the boundaries preciſely ſet. Μέτρον πίστεως, that's the great ecliptick line, which is to bound the career of our moſt forward and ſelf-indulging opinions. If we keep within this compaſs, our motion is natural and regular, but if we ſlide never ſo little out of it, 'tis unnatural and portentous. Or to ſpeak with greatter ſimplicity, he that judges of himſelf according to thoſe excellencies, whether moral or intellectual, which he really has, does φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, think ſoberly; and he that thinks himſelf indow'd with any kind or degrees of excellence which really he has not, does ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ' ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν, think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think.

17. Here then are two things to be conſidered.

Firſt, that we may proceed ſo far as this ſtandard.

And ſecondly, That we may not go beyond it.

Firſt, that we may proceed ſo far.

18. The maſters of ſpiritual mortification had need be fairly interpreted in ſome expreſſions relating to the myſtical death and annihilation of the ſoul, ſince the low and mean opinion we ought upon many accounts to have of our ſelves, cannot reaſonably oblige us to be utterly inſenſible and unconſcious of any excellency or perfection in our ſelves. For tho' it may, and oftentimes is, required of a man to think the truth, yet he can never be under an obligation to be miſtaken. Beſides, 'tis hard to conceive how any man (eſpecially one that dwells much with himſelf, and heedfully reflects upon the actings of his own mind) ſhould be maſter of any conſiderable excellency, and yet not be conſcious of it. And beſides, that very degree of attention, which is required, that a man ſhould not think himſelf more accompliſh'd than indeed he is, will alſo infallibly hinder him from thinking he is

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leſs. 'Tis true indeed, *Moſes* knew not that his face ſhone, after he had been converſing with God on the mount. He ſaw not the glory that ſtream'd from him; and might well wonder what it was that made him ſo dreadful to the people. But 'tis not ſo with the ſoul, whoſe reflective faculty will not fail to give her information of her moſt retir'd and reſerv'd accompliſhments. 'Tis not with the leſſer, as with the greater world, where whole tracts and regions (and thoſe ſome of the beſt too) lye undiſcover'd. No, man cannot be ſuch a ſtranger to his own perfections, ſuch an *America*, to himſelf. For *who can know the things of a man, if not the ſpirit of man which is in him?* And accordingly, we find, that the ignorance of our ſelves, with which mankind has been hitherto ſo univerſally tax'd, runs quite in another chanel, and does not conſiſt in over-looking any of thoſe endowments which we have; but in aſſuming to our ſelves thoſe which we have not.

19. I confeſs (were it poſſible) I ſhould think it adviſable for ſome perſons to be ignorant of ſome of their excellencies, and like the ſun, not to reflect home to their own ſphere of light: Not that I think it unlawful to be conſcious of ones own worth; but only I conſider, that ſome men have not heads ſtrong enough to indure heights, and to walk upon ſpires and pinnacles. But if they can ſtand there without growing vertiginous, they need not queſtion the lawfulneſs of the ſtation; they are ſtill within the region of humility. For 'tis not every thinking well of ones ſelf, that is to be blamed; but when there is more of opinion than there is of worth, or when that worth is gloried in as originally our own, without regarding our dependence upon God. 'Twas this that was the condemnation

of

of the apoſtate Angel, not that he took a juſt complacency in the eminency of his ſtation, but that he vainly arrogated to himſelf what was not his due, in that he ſaid, *I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the ſtars of God, I will ſit upon the ſides of the north, I will aſcend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the moſt High*, Iſa. xiv. 13. 'Twas for this that the Angel of death drew upon *Herod*, not becauſe he was pleaſed with the fineneſs and ſucceſs of his oratory, but becauſe he was not ſo juſt to God as the people were to him, but look'd upon himſelf as the head fountain of his own perfections, and ſo *gave not God the glory*, Acts xii. 23.

20. But now if we take care to proportion our eſtimation of, and our complacencies in our ſelves to the meaſure of our endowments, and if we look upon thoſe very endowments not as originary and independent, but as derivative from the Father of lights, *from whom every good and perfect gift deſcends*, Jam. i. 17. and accordingly refer all to God's glory, and with the elders of the Revelations, take off our crowns from our heads, and caſt them at the foot of the throne, we have not only the expreſs words of the text, but likewiſe, all the reaſon in the world to warrant the ſobriety of our opinions. For, this is but to have a right and exact underſtanding of ones ſelf. And why may not a man be allowed to take a true eſtimate of himſelf, as well as of another man? Or, why ſhould a man think an excellency leſs valuable, becauſe 'tis in himſelf? The happineſs of God conſiſts in ſeeing himſelf as he is; he reflects upon the beauty of his eſſence, and rejoices with an infinite complacency. Now certainly, that wherein conſiſts the happineſs of the creator, cannot be a ſin in the creature. Beſides, I would fain know why a man may not as lawfully think well of himſelf

himſelf upon the ſcore of his real worth, as deſire that others ſhould think well of him for the ſame reaſon? And that he may do the latter, is confeſſed as well by the practice, as by the common ſuffrage of mankind. For otherwiſe what becomes of that good reputation which *Solomon* ſays, *is rather to be choſen than great riches*, Prov. xxii. 1. and of which the beſt and wiſeſt men of all ages, had ever ſuch a tender, ſuch a ſenſible regard? Nay, 'tis look'd upon as a very commendable thing to be ſo affected; and the contrary is cenſured as the mark of a diſſolute and unmoraliz'd temper. Only there is a μέτρον τῦ κανόνος to be obſerv'd in this as well as in the former; and as we are not to *ſtretch out our ſelves beyond our meaſure*, 2 Cor. x. 13. ſo muſt we take care with the great Apoſtle, not to give others occaſion to *think of us above that which they ſee us to be*, 2 Cor. xii. 6. Beſides, if we may not be allow'd to take the height of our own excellencies, how ſhall we be able to give God thanks for them? The elders muſt know they wear crowns, before they can uſe them as inſtruments of adoration; and *Herod* muſt be conſcious of the right genius of his oratory, before he can give God the glory. Again, in the laſt place, if a man may not have leave to take cognizance of his own deſerts, and to value himſelf accordingly, what will become of that Συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν, which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God*, 1 Pet. iii. 21. which is nothing elſe but a ſentence of approbation, which a man paſſes upon himſelf for the well managing of that talent of liberty which God has entruſted him with? Now this is the reward of virtue, and therefore certainly not contrary to it.

21. Neither is this ſelf-eſteem only the reward of virtue but alſo the cauſe of it too; and conſequently 'tis

'tis not only allowable, but alſo highly needful, that we ſhould think honourably of our ſelves. 'Tis to be obſerv'd that moſt, if not all the ſins which men commit, proceed from want of a due ſenſe of the dignity of their nature. And conſequently, a due reflection upon a man's own worth, muſt needs be a ſtrong preſervative againſt whatſoever would ſtain its glory. *Shall ſuch a man as I flee?* was the powerful conſideration that buoy'd up the ſinking ſpirits of *Nehemiah*. And 'tis one of the capital precepts of *Pythogoras*'s morals (and perhaps one of the beſt too that was ever given to the world) ——— Πάντων ὃ μάλιστα αἰχύνεο Σαυτόν. *Above all things reverence thy ſelf.* And 'twas the ſaying of another of the ſons of wiſdom, *let not the reverence of any man cauſe thee to ſin.* Which it certainly will do, unleſs we obſerve the former rule, and reflect with due reverence upon our own worth and dignity.

22. From theſe conſiderations (not to urge any more) it ſeems to me very evident, that 'tis not only lawful, but in ſome reſpects expedient, that we ſhould not be altogether ignorant of thoſe perfections which we are really endued with, that we may be able to judge of our ſelves with the greater exactneſs, and may alſo think our ſelves obliged to return to the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift comes, a more full tribute of praiſe, love and obedience, as conſidering that to whom much is given, much ſhall of him be required. We may then proceed ſo far as this ſtandard.

23. But ſecondly, we muſt not go beyond it. For all beyond this is pride, or the principle of it. Pride, that turn'd the Angels out of Heaven, *Adam* out of paradiſe, and levell'd the great King of *Babylon* with the beaſts that periſh; and which is, or ariſes from an intemperate opinion of our ſelves, which

conſiſts either in aſſuming to our ſelves any excellency which we have not, or in over-rating what we have. Tho' indeed, in ſtrictneſs of notion, this latter falls in with the former: For to over-rate what we have, is indeed to aſſume ſome degree of good which he have not. Here then begins our reſtraint, the reaſonableneſs of which will appear from the abſurdities and ill conſequences which attend the tranſgreſſing of this ſtandard; and which in the third and laſt place, I come now to conſider.

24. I ſhall obſerve only the moſt notorious; and theſe I ſhall reduce to theſe three general heads.

Firſt, That it unqualifies us for the performance of many duties.

Secondly, That it betrays us into many ſins.

And Thirdly, That it fruſtrates all methods of reformation. Of theſe very briefly.

25. Firſt, An exceſſive opinion of our ſelves (and that is ſo which ſurpaſſes the meaſure of our real worth) unqualifies us for the performance of many duties; and that both in relation to God, our neighbour, and our ſelves.

Firſt, In relation to God.

26. As folly leads to atheiſm, ſo does an overweaning opinion of our own wiſdom, or any other excellency, to profaneneſs. For as *the fool hath ſaid in his heart, there is no God*, ſo it is ſaid in another place, that the *ungodly is ſo proud that he careth not for him*, Pſal. x. 4. Pride then is altogether inconſiſtent with that ſubjection, honour and veneration which we owe to God. For how can he ſubmit his paſſions to the authority of the divine will, who has made a law of his own? And as it indiſpoſes us for all active, ſo likewiſe for all paſſive obedience; for how can he ſuffer that with patience, which he thinks he does not deſerve in juſtice; Or how can he

he ſubmit with reſignation to the ſeeming unevenneſs of providential diſpenſations, the equality of which becauſe he cannot diſcern, he muſt in honour to his own underſtanding deny? And upon the ſame ground, it unqualifies us for faith in many of the divine revelations. For how can he captivate his underſtanding to myſteries, who thinks it a diſhonour to own any, and is reſolv'd to believe no farther than he can comprehend?

27. Laſtly, it unqualifies us for gratitude towards God, and conſequently, puts a bar to all thoſe good actions which we would otherwiſe perform upon that principle. And by this it becomes a multiplied, a legion evil. For how can he acknowledge an obligation paſſed upon him by God's favours, who calls them not by that name, but eſteems them as rewards and payments, and inverting the proteſtation of the good Patriarch, Gen. xxii. 16. thinks himſelf worthy of the greateſt of his mercies.

28. Then Secondly, In relation to our neighbour, it unqualifies us for obedience to civil government. For how can he ſubmit to the wiſdom of his ſuperiors, and pay an implicit deference to the occult reaſons of ſtate, who thinks himſelf wiſer than a whole ſenate, and diſputes even the ways of providence? Pride was ever obſerved to be the mother of faction and rebellion; and accordingly St. *Jude* makes it part of the character of the proud Gnoſticks, *to deſpiſe dominions, and ſpeak evil of dignities.*

29. Again, it unqualifies us for thoſe acts of juſtice which conſiſt in a due obſervation of our neighbour's merits, and a deference of external reſpects proportionable to that obſervation. For how can he be at leiſure to take notice of another's worth, who is ſo wholly taken up in the contemplation of his own? Let the reputation of his beſt

friends (if it be poſſible for a proud man to have any) be in never ſo great danger, he, like *Archimedes*, is ſo overbuſie in admiring the creatures of his own brain, thoſe draughts and ideas which he has formed of himſelf there, that he regards not the ruin that is about him. Or if he does, he is ſo far from appearing in their defence (as in juſtice he ought) that he rather rejoices at their ſpots as acceſſions to his own brightneſs.

30. Again, It unqualifies us for the offices of humanity, and civil behaviour, and all kinds of homilitical virtue: For how can he treat thoſe with any tolerable civility, whom he looks down upon as a whole ſpecies below him?

31. Laſtly, It unqualifies us for gratitude toward our benefactors. For how can he think himſelf obliged by man, who counts God his debtor.

32. Then thirdly, In relation to our ſelves, here is this grand ill conſequence of an immoderate ſelf-eſteem, that it unqualifies us not only for higher attainments, but even for the very endeavours of improvements, and ſo cuts ſhort, and bedwarfs all our excellencies. 'Tis the obſervation of *Cicero*, that many would have arrived at wiſdom, if they had not thought themſelves already arrived thither. The opinion of the proud man has ſo far got the ſtart of the real worth, that the latter will never overtake the former.

33. And as the immoderate eſteem of our ſelves, unqualifies us for the performance of many duties; ſo does it alſo, in the ſecond place, betray us into many ſins.

34. Firſt, Into all thoſe ſins which are contrary to the forementioned virtues reſpectively. And beſides them, into many more; ſuch as are preſumption and ſecurity, vexation and diſcontent, contempt of

of others (tho' at the ſame time it expoſes us to theirs) anger and contention, malice and revenge. For the proud man is not content to be his own private admirer, but quarrels with all others that are not of his perſuaſion; and with the tyrant of *Babylon*, kindles a fire for thoſe who will not *fall down and worſhip the Image which he has ſet up.*

35. Neither does the leproſie ſtop here. But as it betrays us into many ſins, ſo in the third and laſt place (which is the moſt diſmal conſequence of all) it fruſtrates all methods of reformation. God's judgments will but exaſperate and inrage him, becauſe he thinks he does not deſerve them; and his mercies will not endear him, becauſe he thinks he does. Advice he thinks he does not need, and reproof he cannot bear. Beſides, he thinks ſo well of himſelf already, that he wonders what you mean by adviſing him to become better; and therefore as he does not endeavour after any of thoſe excellencies which he thinks he has, ſo neither can he dream of mending thoſe faults which he thinks he is not guilty of: Thus is the man ſeal'd up to iniquity, and deeply lodg'd in the ſtrong holds of ſin, where nothing that has a ſalutary influence can come nigh him. And in this he reſembles the firſt precedents of his folly, who from Angels transform'd themſelves into Devils, and fell beyond the poſſibilities of recovery.

36. Theſe are ſome of the fruits of this root of bitterneſs; and though more might be named, yet theſe I think ſufficient to juſtifie this admonition of the Apoſtle to every man, *not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of faith:* Let us then all endeavour to conform our opinions concerning our ſelves to this ſtandard. Let us not ſtretch our ſelves beyond our natural dimenſions

but learn to entertain modeſt and ſober thoughts of our own excellencies and endowments, and mortifie our underſtandings as well as our ſenſitive affections. And thus ſhall we compleat our Lent exerciſe, by joyning the mortification of the ſpirit to that of the fleſh, without which the greateſt auſterities wherewith we can afflict the latter, will not be ſuch a faſt as God has choſen. For what will it avail to macerate the body, while the principal part, the ſoul, remains unmortified? The humility of *Moſes* muſt conſpire with his forty days faſting, to qualifie a man for divine intercourſes, to make him the joy of Angels, the friend of God. Thus then let us accompliſh the refinings of our ſouls, and fill up the meaſure of our mortifications. To which end, let us add this one farther conſideration to what has been already ſaid, that humility, in the judgment even of the High and Lofty One that inhabits eternity, is a virtue of ſuch great excellency, and ſingular advantage to the happineſs of mankind, that our bleſſed Saviour came down from Heaven to teach it; that his whole life was one continued exerciſe of it, and that he has dignified it with the firſt place among his beatitudes. Let us then, as many as profeſs the religion of the humble and crucify'd Jeſus, make it our ſtrict care, that we neglect not this his great commandment, nor omit to copy out this principal line, this main ſtroke of the pattern he has ſet us. Eſpecially let us of this place, who are ſet among the greater lights of the firmament, and whoſe profeſſion and buſineſs is to contemplate truth, and to think of things as God made them in number, weight and meaſure, labour in the firſt place to take juſt and true meaſures of our ſelves, that our knowledge puff us not up, nor our height become our ruin.

Conſiderations upon the nature of ſin; accommodated to the ends both of ſpeculation and practice.

Sect. I.

Of the diviſion of ſin into material and formal; and of the reality and neceſſity of that diſtinction.

1. TO make this our diſcourſe about ſin more clear and diſtinct, before we enter upon its nature, 'twill be requiſite to premiſe ſomething concerning the double acceptation of the word. For nothing can be defined, before it be diſtinguiſhed.

2. I obſerve therefore, that ſin may be conſidered either abſtractedly, for the bare act of obliquity; or concretely, with ſuch a ſpecial dependence of it upon the will, as renders the agent guilty or obnoxious to puniſhment. I ſay, with ſuch a ſpecial dependence of it upon the will; for not every dependence of an action upon the will, is ſufficient to make it imputable, as ſhall be ſhewn hereafter. The former of theſe, by thoſe that diſtinguiſh more nicely, is call'd *tranſgreſſio voluntatis*; the latter, *tranſgreſſio voluntaria*; or according to the more ordinary diſtinction, the former is the material; the latter, the formal part of ſin.

3. This diſtinction is both real and neceſſary. 1*ſt*. It is real: And that becauſe the things diſtinguiſh'd are plainly diſtinct. The act of ſin is one thing, and that ſpecial dependence of it upon the will, that renders him that commits it accountable for it, is another thing. As may appear, Firſt, from the different notions and conceptions that we have of theſe things, whenever we conſider them, or diſcourſe about them. And ſecondly, From the ſeparability, and even actual ſeparation of one of theſe from the other. For 'tis plain, that nothing can be ſeparated from it ſelf. And therefore, tho' wherever there is diſtinction, there is not always ſeparation, yet wherever there is ſeparation there muſt of neceſſity be a true diſtinction. But now this is the caſe here. For the material part of ſin, may actually exiſt without the formal. That is, there may be an act of obliquity, or an irregularact, without any guilt deriv'd upon the agent; or to ſpeak more ſtrictly, without that ſpecial dependence of the act upon the will, which is the foundation of that guilt. This is evident in the caſe of fools and mad men, who may do a great many things materially evil, or evil in themſelves, which are not formally ſo, or evil to them.

4. And as this diſtinction is real, ſo alſo is it very uſeful and neceſſary. Firſt, In the notion, to prevent ambiguities and fallacies, that might ariſe from the uſe of the word [ſin.] As when St. *John* ſays, *He that commits ſin is of the Devil*, John iii. 8. certainly 'twould be a fallacy to argue hence, that every mere act of obliquity is diabolical, becauſe a ſin; ſince not material but formal ſin, was the thing intended in St. *John*'s propoſition. Not that all formal ſin argues him that commits it to be of the Devil, but that no other does ſo but what is ſuch.

5. Secondly,

5. Secondly, In the thing, for the honour and vindication of the divine attributes. Particularly, from the damning of infants merely for the corruption of nature, commonly call'd original ſin; it being repugnant to the meaſures of juſtice, and the dictates of common ſenſe, that the bare doing an irregular act, or the bare having an irregular propenſion ſhould be puniſhable with eternal damnation; as it muſt be, if every dependence of an action upon the will, be enough to render it imputable; that is, if every material be alſo a formal ſin. This, I ſay, would be very unjuſt, becauſe ſuch irregular acts are no more a man's own, than thoſe committed by another man.

6. But it is certain, that God does not proceed by ſuch meaſures; as may be gathered from the œconomy of his ſevereſt diſpenſation, the law. For when he forbad murther with ſuch ſtrictneſs and ſeverity, as to order the murtherer to be taken from his altar, and put to death; yet he provided cities of refuge for the ſecurity of thoſe, who ignorantly or unwillingly had ſhed human blood, *Deut.* xix. Which may be alſo added as a farther confirmation, that every dependence of an irregular act upon the will, is not ſuch as derives guilt upon the willer; and conſequently, that there is a real diſtinction between material and formal ſin.

7. Note alſo, that this diſtinction of material and formal may be applied to good as well as to bad actions, ſome of which are only materially and others alſo formally good, ſo as to denominate him good or virtuous that does them. And that by the latter term of this diſtinction, *viz.* formal, we may underſtand alſo the manner and circumſtances of an action, with the motives and ends of doing it, as well as that ſpecial dependence of it upon the will,

will, as renders it imputable to the doer. And that this diſtinction thus conſider'd will be of great uſe towards the clearing and compoſing a controverſy, which without it will be much eaſier diſputed, than decided. And that is the great queſtion concerning the good actions done by Heathens, whether they were properly virtues, or only a kind of well-favour'd ſins, *ſplendida peccata*, as ſome have thought fit to call them. To which it may now be diſtinctly anſwer'd, that no doubt but that many of their actions were truly good, if by good you mean materially good, as being for the ſubſtance of them conformable to right reaſon. But if by good you mean formally good, ſo it ſeems moſt reaſonable to think that for the generality at leaſt they were not, as not being done in a right manner, from due motives, and for a right end, *&c.* But whether there be an abſolute neceſſity that it ſhould be ſo, or whether *de facto* it always was ſo, is another queſtion. The inſtance of the *Canaanitiſh* woman, whoſe faith our Lord ſo commended (*Mat* xv.) deſerves here to be conſider'd, as alſo the note of a lerned perſon upon it, Dr. *Whitby*. Whence we may learn, that the faith of *Gentiles* is not not only pleaſing to God, but ſometimes more excellent than that of thoſe to whom the promiſes belong; *viz.* when upon a leſſer motive it brings forth equal fruits. And in this I expreſs my ſelf a little more warily and juſtly than I did formerly concerning the ſame matter in the preface to the tranſlation of *Hierocles*; wherein (as being a childiſh work, written when I was young) there are ſeveral crude and faulty paſſages, and ſuch as ſtand not with the approbation of my now riper judgment. Particularly, where 'tis argued againſt the neceſſity of acting out of an intention for God's glory to make our actions good;

good; and that for this reaſon, becauſe to conſtitute the nature of ſin which is contrary, 'tis not required that there be an intention of offending God. Which argument tho' borrow'd from a great man, *Epiſcopius*, I think not to be at all concluding, there being a great diſparity between our good actions and our bad ones, ſince all circumſtances muſt concur to make our actions good, whereas to render them evil, the leaſt defect is ſufficient. According to the maxim, *Bonum ex cauſâ integrâ, malum ex quolibet defectu.* But to return to the point in hand.

8. This diſtinction, I confeſs, is ſometimes otherwiſe uſed, where the material of Sin is taken for all that is ſubſtantial and poſitive in the act, not including the obliquity, and the formal for the obliquity, not including that ſpecial dependence of it upon the will which makes it imputable. Thus I remember the Angelical Doctor diſtinguiſhes upon the definition which St. *Auſtin* gives of Sin, that it is *Dictum, factum vel concupitum contra legem Dei æternam*, Prim. Secund. Quæſt. 71. Art. 6. Here, ſays he, St. *Auſtin* points out both the matter and the form of ſin. The matter in the Subſtance of the act, the form in the obliquity, its contrariety to the law.

9. But it may be conſidered that *Aquinas* here, and all thoſe that ſo uſe the phraſe, by the matter of ſin, intend only that which is equally common both to good and bad actions, the *ſubſtratum commune*, as the ſchools call it; and by the form, that which ſpecifies the act otherwiſe indifferent, and gives it the firſt difference of ſin: And this indeed, is according to propriety as well as the other. For the material part of ſin is compleat ſin in its kind; and conſequently, muſt alſo conſiſt of its matter and form. But when ſin is conſidered according to its

full

full latitude, then the whole irregular act, ſubſtance and obliquity goes for the material, and that ſpecial dependence of it upon the will which derives guilt upon the agent for the formal part of ſin. And in this ſenſe I now conſider it.

SECT. II.

A more particular and explicite conſideration of material ſin, and what it adds to the general nature of evil.

1. AFter our diſtinction of ſin into material and formal, and our juſtification of that diſtinction, it follows, that in the next place, we give ſome more particular and explicit account of the nature of material ſin. That it is an irregular act in general, was intimated before; but to ſpeculate its nature more thoroughly, we muſt ſet it in a clearer light, and define what it is that makes an action irregular. And the account which I ſhall give of this, I ſhall ground upon that definition of St. *John*, who tells us, that *Sin is a tranſgreſſion of the law.* So that tranſgreſſion of the law, is the irregularity of an action, and is more explicitely, the material part of ſin.

2. Thus far in general. But now to make tranſgreſſion of the law fully adequate, and commenſurate to material ſin, ſo as to extend to all kinds of it; it concerns us in the next place to enquire, what is here to be underſtood by [law] and upon the right ſtating of this, will depend the whole theory of material ſin.

3. By

3. By law therefore, in the firſt place, is to be underſtood that which is poſitive; that is, any rule of action preſcribed to us by God, conſider'd only as preſcribed. Any action ſo preſcribed, be it otherwiſe never ſo indifferent for the matter, puts on the force of a law from the authority of the preſcriber; and every tranſgreſſion of ſuch a rule is ſin.

4. But the tranſgreſſion of law in this narrow ſenſe of the word, will not comprehend all the kinds of material ſin. For altho' poſitive law creates the firſt difference in ſome things, yet it does not in all. For had God never made any poſitive law, yet the doing of ſome actions would have been ſin; nay, there was ſin where there was no poſitive law, as may be probably collected from the fall of Angels. But where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion. There muſt be therefore ſome other law, beſides poſitive law.

5. By law therefore, ſecondly, is to be underſtood the law of reaſon, that candle of the Lord that lights every man that comes into the world in his paſſage through it. There are two ways of conſidering this. For firſt, by the law of reaſon may be underſtood, that ſtock of practical principles which men bring with them into the world, as originally impreſſed upon their natures, according to the hypotheſis of thoſe who are for innate notions. For as the animal nature is not only ſuppoſed to be furniſh'd with ſenſe and perception, but alſo with certain connatural inſtincts and impreſſions, whereby animals are directed and inclined to ſenſible good. So for the better guardianſhip and ſecurity of virtue, ſome may be apt to imagine, that God has furniſh'd the rational nature, not only with the faculty of reaſoning, but alſo with certain common principles and notions, whereby 'tis directed

rected and inclined to the good of the reaſonable life. And this perhaps is what moſt men mean by the law of nature.

6. Or elſe ſecondly, by the law of reaſon may be underſtood certain practical concluſions or moral truths, which a man, either upon the firſt application of his mind to them, apprehends or perceives, or by the due uſe of his rational powers, by thought and reflection, finds out or diſcovers, upon the conſideration of the nature of things. In ſhort, that practical ſentence which the mind gives concerning the fitneſs or unfitneſs of a thing to be done.

7. If the law of reaſon be taken the firſt way, for principles of morality impreſſed upon the ſoul, and brought with it into the world; beſides the unphiloſophicalneſs, and indeed unintelligibility of the ſuppoſition of any ſuch original impreſſions, there is this farther inconvenience in it, that this will be but another branch of poſitive law. For this inward impreſſion will be as much a divine revelation, as outward ſcripture; and neither of theſe can be the ultimate reaſon into which the morality of our actions is to be reſolv'd.

8. But if the law of reaſon be taken the latter way, for that ſentence which the mind gives upon either an intellectual view, or a rational conſideration of things, concerning what is reaſonable or fit to be done, this will of neceſſity lead us higher; namely, to conſider that there are certain, antecedent, and independent aptneſſes or qualities in things; with reſpect to which, they are fit to be commanded or forbidden by the wiſe Governour of the world, in ſome poſitive law; whether that of internal, or external revelation, or both.

9. We are therefore in the next place, to reſolve theſe antecedent aptneſſes of things, into their proper

per ground; or to aſſign what that is which makes an action fit to be commanded, or forbidden. Which when we have done, we are advanced as high as we can go; and have found out that ſupreme, eternal and irreverſible law, which preſcribes meaſures to all the reſt, and is the laſt reaſon of good and evil.

10. That therefore which makes an action fit to be commanded or forbidden by the wiſe Governour of the world, can be nothing elſe in general, but its reſpective tendency to promote, or hinder the attainment of ſome certain end or other, which that Governour propoſes. For all action being for ſome end, and not the end it ſelf; its aptneſs to be commanded or forbidden, muſt be founded upon its ſerviceableneſs or diſſerviceableneſs to ſome end. So much in general.

11. I farther conſider, that this end muſt be that which is ſimple and abſolutely the beſt and greateſt. For no other is worthy of God. Now certainly, there is none better or greater, than the univerſal Good of the whole ſyſtem of things; which is therefore to be regarded, and proſecuted to the utmoſt, both by God, and all other intelligent beings.

12. And hence ariſes this firſt and great canon or law; that whatever naturally tends to the promotion of the common intereſt, is good, and apt to be commanded: And whatever naturally tends to the diſintereſt of the publick is evil, and apt to be forbidden. This is the great baſis of morality; the fix'd and immutable ſtandard of good and evil; and the fundamental law of nature.

13. And becauſe there are ſome actions *in ſpecie*, which with relation to the preſent ſyſteme both of the material and intellectual world, have ſuch a natural

natural connexion with the furtherance or prejudice of this great end; therefore theſe by way of aſſumption, under the two general propoſitions, are intrinſically and naturally good or bad; and are thereby differenc'd from thoſe that are made ſo only by arbitrary conſtitution. Though yet in one reſpect, theſe are arbitrary too, in as much as they depend upon ſuch a particular hypotheſis of the world which was it ſelf arbitrary; and which if God ſhould at any time change, the relations of actions to the great end might change too; that which now naturally makes for the common advantage might as naturally make againſt it; and conſequently, that which is now good, might have been then evil. But ſtill the two great hinges of morality ſtand as fix'd and as unvariable, as the two poles; whatever is naturally conducive to the common intereſt, is good; and whatever has a contrary influence, is evil. Theſe are propoſitions of eternal and unchangeable verity, and which God can no more cancel or diſannul, than he can deny himſelf.

14. So that now to analyze the immorality of any action into its laſt principles: If it be enquired, why ſuch an action is to be avoided, the immediate anſwer is, becauſe 'tis ſin; if it be ask'd, why 'tis ſin; the immediate anſwer is, becauſe 'tis forbidden; if why forbidden, becauſe 'twas in it ſelf fit to be forbidden; if why fit, becauſe naturally apt to prejudice the common intereſt: If it be ask'd, why the natural aptneſs of a thing to prejudice the common intereſt, ſhould make it fit to be forbidden; the anſwer is, becauſe the common intereſt is above all things to be regarded and proſecuted: If farther, a reaſon be demanded of this, there can no other be given, but becauſe 'tis the beſt and greateſt end; and conſequently, is to be deſired and proſecuted,

ſecuted, not for the ſake of any thing elſe, but purely for it ſelf.

15. So that now the laſt law whereof ſin is a tranſgreſſion, is this great and ſupreme law concerning the proſecution of the common intereſt. And every ſin is ſome way or other, directly or indirectly, a tranſgreſſion of this law. Thoſe againſt any moral precept, directly; and thoſe againſt a precept merely poſitive, indirectly; becauſe 'tis for the common good, that the ſupreme authority be acknowledg'd and ſubmitted to; let the inſtance wherein obedience is required, be in it ſelf never ſo indifferent.

16. If it be now objected, that according to theſe meaſures there will be no difference between moral and phyſical evil, contrary to the common diſtinction between *malum turpe*, and *malum noxium*; the one as oppoſed to *bonum utile*, and the other as oppoſed to *bonum honeſtum*; I anſwer, that I know of no good or evil, but of the end, and of the means. Good of the end, is what we call *bonum jucundum*; good of the means, is what we call *utile*. Evil of the end there is properly none; but that only is evil, which is prejudicial to it. Indeed the old maſters of morality ſeem'd to diſcourſe of moral good and evil, as of abſolute natures; as of eſſential rectitudes, and eſſential turpitudes. But I think it greater accuracy to ſay, that moral good and evil are relative things; that *bonum honeſtum* is one and the ſame with that which is truly *utile*; and that *malum turpe*, is that which is naturally againſt the profit of the community. And herein I aſſert no more than what the great maſter of the Latin philoſophy and eloquence, profeſſedly contends for in the third book of his offices. And therefore, inſtead of evading the objection, I freely own its charge; and

affirm, that there is no difference between moral and phyſical evil, any otherwiſe, than that phyſical evil extends to all things in nature which obſtruct happineſs; whereas moral evil is appropriated to actions that do ſo.

SECT. III.

The ſecond part of the diſcourſe which briefly treats of formal ſin; with the requiſites neceſſary to its conſtitution. Where alſo 'tis enquired, whether the nature of ſin be poſitive or privative.

1. WE are now come to the ſecond part of our diſcourſe, where we are to treat of the nature of formal ſin, that is, of ſin conſider'd not abſtractedly for the mere act of obliquity, but concretely, with ſuch a ſpecial dependence of it upon the will, as ſerves to render the agent guilty, or obnoxious to puniſhment.

2. And here, the firſt thing to be obſerv'd is, that altho' material ſin does neither in its notion, nor in its exiſtence, include formal ſin; yet formal ſin (as taken for that ſpecial dependence of an action upon the will) does always include the other. Tho' there may be a tranſgreſſion of the law without formal ſin, yet the latter always ſuppoſes the former; and as St. *John* ſays, *Whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſes alſo the law*, 1 John iii. 4.

3. But that which formal ſin adds over and above to material, and under whoſe reſpect we are now to conſider it, is the connotation of that ſpecial dependence

dependence of it upon the will, which derives guilt upon the agent. So that for a definition of formal ſin we may ſay, that it is an irregular action, or a tranſgreſſion of the law; ſo depending upon the will, as to make the agent liable to puniſhment. This is in the phraſe of St. *John*, ἔχειν ἁμαρτίαν to have ſin; that is, ſo as to be accountable for it; for he ſpeaks of that ſin which upon confeſſion, God is *faithful and juſt to forgive*; and conſequently not of material, (for where there is no guilt, there can be no remiſſion) but of formal ſin.

4. From this general notion of formal ſin, proceed we to enquire, what that ſpecial dependence is that makes an irregular action formally a ſin. And here 'tis in the firſt place ſuppoſed, that not every dependence of an action upon the will, is ſufficient to make it imputable. And with very good reaſon. For otherwiſe, the actions of infants, fools and madmen, would be imputable; for theſe (as indeed all actions) have ſome dependence upon the will; at leaſt, as a phyſical principle.

5. To be poſitive therefore, that an irregular action may ſo depend upon the will, as to derive guilt upon the agent, 'tis neceſſary firſt, that it proceed from the will as from a free principle; free not only in oppoſition to coaction, (for ſo all the actions of the will are free) but in oppoſition to neceſſity, or determination to one part of the contradiction. That is, in one word, 'tis neceſſary to the imputableneſs of an action, that it be avoidable. To this purpoſe is that ſaying, *Nemo peccat* (that is, *formaliter*) *in eo quod vitare non poteſt*: And great reaſon, for he that cannot avoid tranſgreſſing the law, is not ſo much as capable of being obliged by it; (becauſe no man can be obliged to what is impoſſible) and if he be not obliged by it, certainly

he cannot morally and formally break it. A thing which the patrons of phyſical predetermination would do well to conſider.

6. But when I make it neceſſary to the imputableneſs of an action, that it be freely exerted, I would not be underſtood of an immediate freeneſs. For certainly thoſe rooted and confirmed ſinners, who have by long uſe reduced themſelves under a neceſſity of ſinning, are never the more excuſable for the impotence they have contracted. If there be liberty in the principle 'tis ſufficient.

7. The next requiſite, and that which gives the laſt and finiſhing ſtroke to formal ſin, is, that it proceed from the will, ſufficiently inſtructed by the underſtanding. That is, to make a man ſin formally, 'tis requiſite that he has not only a power of avoiding that action which is a tranſgreſſion of the law; but that he alſo know it to be a tranſgreſſion of the law; at leaſt, that he be in a capacity ſo to do; that ſo he may be induced to exert that power. And 'tis alſo neceſſary, that he know that he commits it; that is, he muſt have, or at leaſt be in a capacity of having, both *notitia juris*, and *notitia facti*.

8. The former of theſe depends upon that common principle, that laws do not oblige till they are publiſh'd; according to that known maxim, *Leges conſtituuntur cum promulgantur*; and that other, *Leges quæ conſtringunt hominum vitas, intelligi ab omnibus debent.* And the latter alſo depends upon the equity of the ſame principle, tho' ſomewhat more remotely; for without this, the law with relation to that particular inſtance, cannot be ſaid to be properly konwn. For altho' I know ſuch a ſpecies of action (ſuppoſe adultery) to be a tranſgreſſion of the law, yet if I know not that by ſuch a particular inſtance

I commit it, I cannot be ſaid to know that this my action is a tranſgreſſion of the law; and conſequently, (ſuppoſing this my ignorance invincible) am wholly excuſable; as appears in the caſe of *Abimelech*, when he took *Abraham*'s wife. *Gen.* xx.

9. So that to the conſtitution of formal ſin theſe two things are required; Firſt, That the tranſgreſſor have a power either immediately, or at leaſt in the principle, of not doing that action which is a tranſgreſſion: Secondly, That he either do or may know that act to be a tranſgreſſion of the law; and likewiſe, that he know when he commits it. To the committing of which every man is tempted not by God, nor it may be always by the Devil; but by the ſenſual inclinations of his own corrupt nature. Which inclinations are of themſelves rather a ſtate of temptation to ſin, than actual or formal ſins. Then they become ſo when conſented to; whether it be as to the deſires themſelves, or as to the execution of them. And if the conſent to the latter be compleat, then is the ſin in a moral eſtimation fully conſummated, whether the outward act follow or no. And thus have I ſhewn the riſe, progreſs, and maturity of ſin; I have preſented to view both the imperfect embrio, and the full proportion'd and animated monſter. All which I ſhall briefly compriſe in that compendious deſcription of St. *James*, *Luſt when it is conceiv'd bringeth forth ſin; and ſin when it is finiſhed, bringeth forth death*, James i. 15.

10. There is one thing behind, relating to the nature of ſin in common; which I ſhall briefly conſider; and that is, whether its nature be poſitive or privative. For the clearer conſideration of which matter, we are to diſtinguiſh between ſin abſtractly, and ſin concretely taken; or in other words, between that action, which is ſinful, and the ſinfulneſs of

that action. As for the action which is denominated ſinful, there is no doubt but that we may ſafely allow that to be of a poſitive nature, as being either ſome motion of the body, or ſome thought of the mind, which are phyſical realities. But now as to the very ſinfulneſs of the action, or ſin as ſin as they call it; this cannot, with the leave either of philoſophy or of religion, be maintain'd to be poſitive, upon the account of the intolerable abſurdities that will follow upon that poſition. Theſe two eſpecially; 1. That if ſin as ſin were any thing poſitive and real in nature, then God would be the author of it. 2. That upon that ſuppoſition it would be good, and not evil, which would be a contradiction to ſuppoſe. Which things being too abſurd to be admitted, and too inſeparable to be avoided, it is neceſſary that we ſay with St. *Auſtin*, *mali nulla natura eſt, ſed amiſſio boni mali nomen accepit*, that there is no ſuch thing as any nature in evil, but that what we call evil is the loſs of good. *De civ. dei. lib.* 11. *c.* 9. Or as the ſchoolmen a little more diſtinctly expreſs it, that evil is not poſitive, but privative: Meaning by evil, not evil as concretely, but evil as abſtractly taken, or evil as evil. For we are not here conſidering evil at large, as it takes in the thing that is evil (in which reſpect indeed it includes ſomething poſitive) but the very preciſe formality of evil as ſuch, or malice in the abſtract as it is ſometimes call'd, which by the conſent of the ſchools is well made to be privative; that is, to conſiſt in the want of ſome perfection due to, or convenient to a thing or action. Which matter is well expreſſed by *Durandus* in theſe words, *formalis ratio mali eſt ratio privativa*, *Lib.*2. *Diſtinct.* 34. *Qu.*2. only we muſt make a difference between that which is only evil in it ſelf, and that which is evil to another,

another, *malum in ſe*, and *malum alteri*, as it is in *Suarez*. The evil of that which is evil in it ſelf, is the privation of ſome convenience to the thing it ſelf; the evil of that which is evil to another is the privation of convenience of one thing to another. But they have this in common, that privation is the formal reaſon of them both.

11. Againſt this it was once to me an objection among other things, that even ſins of omiſſion, which bid the faireſt for privation, ſeem yet to be poſitive, becauſe their irregularity is not properly the not willing to do what ought to be done, but the willing not to do it. But to this I now anſwer in the firſt place, that it is both. For the omiſſion may be conſider'd either *ex parte actûs*, or *ex parte objecti*. If it be *ex parte actûs*, then the omiſſion is the not willing what ought to be will'd, which is plainly privative in the very notion of the thing. But if it be *ex parte objecti*, then the omiſſion is indeed not the not willing, but the willing not; which tho' privative as to the object, is yet poſitive as to the act, as poſitive in that reſpect as any ſin of commiſſion is. But then to this I anſwer ſecondly, That tho' ſin of omiſſion in this ſenſe, as 'tis taken for a man's willing not to do what ought to be done, does include ſomething poſitive, *viz.* the act of the will ſo willing; yet the formality of the ſin does not lie there, that is in the act it ſelf, which for the ſubſtantial and poſitive part of it is good, at leaſt indifferent; but in a certain defect attending that act with relation to the unduenes of the object, *viz.* the not doing what ought to be done, otherwiſe call'd the obliquity of the act, which beſpeaks a privation of ſome perfection which it ought to have; if not in it ſelf, yet at leaſt with relation to its object. That which is the object of

it, being an undue one, as it is in ſins of commiſſion. So that in ſhort, tho' the act of ſin be poſitive, yet that which is properly the ſin of the act is always privative.

12. From whence it will follow, that God may be concern'd in all that is real and poſitive (ſince the ſin lies not there) relating to the motions of our concupiſcence, without being the author of ſin. And that not only as to the evil determinations of our will, according to the doctrine of divine concourſe, as 'tis ſtated in the ſchools, which ſuppoſes ſuch determinations as to the ſubſtance of them, to depend upon the firſt cauſe as well as the ſecond; but alſo as to our ſenſations, even thoſe which vicious men have in their unlawful indulgencies. For ſince thoſe ſenſations are not in themſelves evil, as to the ſubſtance or phyſical entity of them, as being poſitive modifications of the ſoul, or the ſoul it ſelf exiſting after a different manner; but only in regard of the unduneſs, or want of right order in the circumſtances wherewith they are attended; it is plain to any one that will conſider, that there can be no abſurdity or inconvenience in ſuppoſing God to be the author of them. Nor can this be ſeriouſly urg'd as an objection againſt God's being the author of our ſenſations that ſome of them are inordinately applied, without great ignorance of phyloſophy, and of the true nature of things. But as to the other part, tho' it be no harm to ſuppoſe all that is poſitive in an evil action to depend upon God in the way of concourſe, becauſe God would not be then concern'd in the malice of the action; yet, (which may deſerve to be well conſider'd) if God ſhould be the cauſe why the action ſuppoſed ſinful, ſhould be an action of ſuch a ſpecies, that is, if he ſhould determine the will to the action,

as

as ſpecify'd by ſuch circumſtances of diſorder as make it unlawful, I ſee not then how he could be abſolv'd from being the author of ſin.

Sect. IV.

Corollaries deduced from the whole. The foulneſs and deformity of ſin repreſented. That it is the greateſt of evils. That no formal ſin can be in its ſelf venial. That in all probability vindicative juſtice is eſſential to God, hence deduced. The reconciling of eternal puniſhments with the divine juſtice. That he who throughly underſtands, and actually attends to the nature of ſin, cannot poſſibly commit it.

1. HAving thus far carried on the theory of ſin, we may now ſit down, and take an eſtimate of its foulneſs and deformity. And methinks I am affrighted at the uglineſs of the face which I have unmask'd, and am ready to ſtart back from the diſtorted and ill-boding monſter. For however the magick of ſelf-love may reconcile men to their own faults, yet if we ſet the object at a more convenient diſtance from the eye, and conſider the nature of ſin irreſpectively to our ſelves; 'twill certainly appear according to the precedent meaſures, to be the moſt deform'd, monſtrous thing, that can either be found or conceiv'd in nature.

2. For if we conſider it in the groſs, it is made up of a deform'd object, and of a fooliſh and unreaſonable

ſonable choice, than which, what can be imagin'd more monſtrous and abſurd? If we conſider it as a violation of the poſitive law, what can be more indecorus, than for a creature to violate the commands, and trample upon the authority of that awful excellence to whom he owes his life, his motion, and his very being? If we conſider it as a violation of the law of reaſon, what can be more monſtrous and unnatural, than for a man to rebel againſt the vicarious power of God in his ſoul? To refuſe to live according to that part of him, whereby he is a man; to ſuffer the ferine and brutiſh part to get the aſcendant over that which is rational and divine; to refuſe to be govern'd by thoſe ſacred digeſts, which are the tranſcripts of the moral nature of God; and to act againſt the very frame and contexture of his being. Laſtly, If we conſider it as a tranſgreſſion againſt that great and ſovereign law of promoting the common happineſs, what a monſtrous evil muſt that be which croſſes and oppoſes the beſt of ends, and which is alſo propoſed by the beſt of beings; that for the intereſt of an inconſiderable part (commonly ones ſelf) juſtles the great wheel of ſociety out of its proper track; that by purſuing a leſſer, in prejudice to a greater good, diſturbs the order of things, diſlocates the frame, and untunes the harmony of the univerſe!

3. We may alſo hence conclude, that ſin is the greateſt evil that is, or that can poſſibly be. For it is contrarily oppoſed to the greateſt poſſible good; and conſequently, muſt needs be the greateſt evil. And beſides, 'tis that which in no caſe or juncture whatſoever, is to be committed; and therefore muſt be the greateſt evil; becauſe otherwiſe, it might happen to come into competition with a greater, and ſo commence eligible; which is contrary to the

ſuppoſition

ſuppoſition. Moreover, the greatneſs of this evil above all others, is *à poſteriori*, farther confirm'd from the greatneſs of the ſacrifice required for its atonement. God could not, or at leaſt, thought not fit to remit it, without the ſhedding of blood; and that too, of the blood of God. So great a fool is he, ſo little does he conſider, that makes a mock at ſin.

4. Again, It may be hence collected, that no formal ſin can be in its own nature venial. For according to the former meaſures, every formal ſin, tho' never ſo ſmall, is a ſin againſt the greateſt charity imaginable. For 'tis againſt that charity, whereby I ought to promote the ends of God, and proſecute the great intereſt of the univerſe. And conſequently, cannot be in its own nature venial, or pardonable without repentance.

5. Nay, may I not farther conclude according to the preceding meaſures, that 'tis very probable, that no ſin could have been pardon'd even with repentance, had there not been alſo ſatisfaction made for it; and that vindicative juſtice is eſſential to the nature of God; For when I conſider ſin, I find it ſo diametrically contrary to the eſſential ſanctity of God, and ſo deſtructive to that great end which he cannot but propoſe, that he muſt needs hate it with an infinite hatred. But how he ſhould do ſo, and yet not puniſh for it, is hard to underſtand.

6. Upon theſe meaſures we may alſo find out a way of reconciling eternal puniſhments with divine juſtice. The great objection is, what proportion is there between a tranſient act of ſin, and eternal miſery? And if there be none, how is it conſiſtent with divine juſtice to inflict the one for the other? This has been a great difficulty. But now if we conſider ſin as contrarily oppoſed to the greateſt poſſible

poſſible good, the good of the univerſe; and conſequently, as the greateſt poſſible evil, its demerit will be ſuch, that we need not fear 'twill be overpuniſh'd, even with eternal miſery. For if any miſery is to be endured, rather than one ſin to be committed, 'tis alſo juſt that any may be, when it is committed. For the equity of both, depends upon ſin's being the greateſt evil.

7. The laſt deduction which I ſhall make from the premiſes is this, that he who throughly underſtands, and actually attends to the nature of ſin, cannot poſſibly commit it. For as long as he does ſo, he muſt look upon it as the greateſt evil, otherwiſe he cannot be ſaid rightly to underſtand it. And if he look upon it as the greateſt evil, he cannot chuſe it, ſo long as he continues in that judgment; becauſe the then chuſing it, would be the chuſing of all that whereby it exceeds other evils, *gratis*; which is the chuſing of evil as evil; which is impoſſible.

8. Whoſoever therefore conſents to the commiſſion of ſin, paſſes firſt a wrong judgment upon it, has the light of his underſtanding darkned, and intercepted by a cloud of paſſion, loſes the preſent conviction of ſin's being the greateſt evil, and ſo commits it to avoid (as he then fooliſhly thinks) a greater. So that the cauſe and origine of all ſin, is ignorance, folly, and inadvertence: There is a falſe propoſition in the underſtanding, before there is any miſapplication in the will; and 'tis through the ſwimming of the head that the feet ſlip, and loſe their ſtation. And yet the ſinner is no way excuſable for this his deception, becauſe 'tis the ignorance of that which he habitually knows, and he might have attended better; and 'twas his fault that he did not.

9. And

9. And 'tis the recovering and awaking up into this conviction, that is the principle of repentance and reformation of life. When a man by the aid of grace, and the uſe of due attention, reſumes his interrupted judgment of ſin's being the greateſt evil; he then comes again to himſelf, forms new reſolutions never to commit it, and returns to the wiſdom of the juſt. So great reaſon had the pſalmiſt to pray, *O grant me underſtanding and I ſhall live*, Pſal. cxix.

The PRAYER.

O My God, who art pure light, and in whom there is no darkneſs at all; who art pure love, and hateſt nothing but ſin, and hateſt that infinitely; give me an heart after thine own heart, that I may alſo abhor it without meaſure, and without end. Open thou mine eyes, that I may ſee thoſe two wondrous things of thy law, the beauty of holineſs, and the deformity of ſin. Inſpire me with that charity which ſeeketh not her own, that I may ever propoſe and follow that great and excellent end which thou propoſeſt, that I may ever adhere to that which is ſimply and abſolutely beſt; and never for any ſelf-advantage, diſturb the order of thy creation. O let me never ſo far abuſe thoſe faculties thou haſt given me, as to thwart the deſigns of thy goodneſs and wiſdom, and to interrupt that harmony, wherein thou ſo delighteſt. But let all my deſigns be generous, unſelfiſh and ſincere, ſo as chiefly to rejoyce at the good of thy creation, at whoſe very material beauty *the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy.* Holy Father, 'tis thy will that this thy great family ſhould be proſperous and happy, and the better part of it thy Angels, ſtrictly conform to it; O let

this

this *thy will be done here on earth as it is in heaven*; and grant that every member of this great body, may ſo ſtudy the good of the whole, that thou may'ſt once more review the works of thy hands; and with a fatherly complacency, pronounce them good. Grant this for the ſake of him who gave his life for the happineſs of the world, thy Son *Jeſus*. Amen.

II.

GIve me wiſdom that ſitteth by thy throne; and reject me not from among thy children. That wiſdom which was with thee from the beginning; which knoweth all thy works; and was preſent when thou madeſt the world; and knew what was acceptable in thy ſight, and right in thy commandments. O ſend her out of thy holy Heavens, and from the throne of thy glory; that being preſent, ſhe may labour with me; that I may know, and throughly conſider what an evil it is to affront thy authority, to break through the bounds which thou haſt ſet, to rebel againſt the moſt excellent and divine part of my nature, and to oppoſe that which thou lov'ſt, and which is of all things the moſt lovely. O let thy wiſdom dwell with me, let my loins be always girt, and this my light always burning, that I may never be deceiv'd through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, nor ſeek death in the error of my life. Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I might not ſin againſt thee; O grant me underſtanding and I ſhall live. Keep I beſeech thee, this conviction ſtill freſh and fully awake in me, that ſin is the greateſt of all evils, that ſo the fear of none may ever drive me to do the thing which thy ſoul hates. Conſider and hear me, O Lord my God, lighten my eyes that I ſleep not in death. *Amen, Amen.*

An

An IDEA of happineſs: Enquiring wherein the greateſt happineſs attainable by man in this life does conſiſt.

By way of Letter to a Friend.

SIR,

1. THough you have been pleas'd to aſſign me the task of an Angel, and in that reſpect, have warranted me to diſobey you; yet, ſince a conſiderable part of that experimental knowledge which I have of happineſs is owing to the delight, which I take in your virtuous and endearing friendſhip, I think 'tis but reaſonable I ſhould give you an idea of that, whereof you have given me the poſſeſſion.

2. You deſire to know of me, wherein the greateſt happineſs attainable by man in this life, does conſiſt: And here, tho' I ſee my ſelf engaged in a work already too difficult for me, yet I find it neceſſary to enlarge it: For, ſince the greateſt happineſs, or *ſummum bonum* of this life, is a ſpecies of happineſs in general; and ſince it is called [greateſt] not becauſe abſolutely perfect and compleat; but inaſmuch as it comes neareſt to that which indeed is ſo, it will be neceſſary firſt to ſtate the notion of happineſs in general; and then to define, wherein that

that happineſs does conſiſt which is perfect and compleat, before I can proceed to a reſolution of your queſtion.

3. By happineſs, in the moſt general ſenſe of the word, I underſtand nothing elſe but an enjoyment of any good. The leaſt degree of good has the ſame proportion to the leaſt degree of happineſs, as the greateſt has to the greateſt; and conſequently, as many ways as a man enjoys any good, ſo many ways he may be ſaid to be happy: Neither will the mixture of evil make him forfeit his right to this title, unleſs it either equals the good he enjoys, or exceeds it; and then indeed it does: But the reaſon is, becauſe in ſtrictneſs of ſpeaking, upon the whole account, the man enjoys no good at all: For if the good and evil be equal ballanc'd, it muſt needs be indifferent to that man either to be, or not to be, there being not the leaſt grain of good to determine his choice: So that he can no more be ſaid to be happy in that condition, than he could before he was born. And much leſs, if the evil exceeds the good: For then heis not only not happy, but abſolutely and purely miſerable; for after an exact commenſuration ſuppoſed between the good and the evil, all that remains over of the evil, is pure and ſimple miſery; which is the caſe of the damn'd: And when 'tis once come to this (whatſoever ſome mens metaphyſicks may perſuade them) I am very well ſatisfied, that 'tis better not to be, than to be. But now on the other ſide, if the good does never ſo little outweigh the evil, that overplus of good is as pure and unallay'd in its proportion, as if there were no ſuch mixture at all; and conſequently, the poſſeſſion of it may properly be call'd happineſs.

4. I know the maſters of moral philoſophy do not treat of happineſs in this latitude, neither is it fit

ſit they ſhould: For their buſineſs being to point out the ultimate end of human actions, it would be an impertinent thing for them, to give any other idea of happineſs than the higheſt: But however, this does not hinder, but that the general idea of happineſs may be extended farther, even to the fruition of any good whatſoever: Neither is there any reaſon to find fault with the latitude of this notion, ſince we acknowledge degrees even in glory.

5. In this general idea of happineſs, two things are contain'd, one is ſome good, either real or apparent, in the fruition of which, we are ſaid to be in ſome meaſure happy. The other is the very fruition it ſelf. The firſt of theſe, is uſually called objective happineſs; and the latter, formal. Which way of ſpeaking, ſeems to imply as if theſe were two ſorts of happineſs. And ſo *Euſtachius à Sancto Paulo* in his Ethicks, ſeems to divide happineſs into theſe, as diſtinct ſpecies; when ſpeaking of them, he ſays, *Beatitudo duplex aſſignatur, altera objectiva, altera formalis.* And again, *de utroque genere felicitatis in hoc tractatu diſſerimus.* And again, *duas diſputationes inſtituemus, priorem de priori ſpecie felicitatis, poſteriorem de poſteriori, &c.* But this ſeems to me not ſo artificial; for they are not indeed two ſorts of happineſs, but rather two conſtituent parts of the ſame, and ought I think to be call'd rather the objective, and the formal part of happineſs, than objective and formal happineſs. Since they are not ſubjective parts, that carry the whole along with them, but as it were integral, or rather eſſential parts, which jointly concur to make up one and the ſame actual whole: Neither of them are ſufficient alone, but they are both equally neceſſary. That the laſt of theſe is a neceſſary ingredient, I think no doubt can reaſonably be made: For what

would the greateſt good imaginable ſignifie without fruition? And that the former is likewiſe neceſſary is no leſs certain: For how can there be ſuch a thing as fruition, without an object? I grant, 'tis not at all neceſſary that the object be a real ſubſtantial good; if it appear ſo, 'tis ſufficient.

6. From this diſtinction of real and apparent good, ſome may be apt to take occaſion to diſtinguiſh happineſs likewiſe in two ſorts, real and imaginary: But I believe upon a more narrow ſcrutiny into the matter, 'twill be found, that all happineſs, according to its proportion, is equally real, and that which they term imaginary, too well deſerves the name; there being no ſuch thing in nature: For let the object of it be never ſo phantaſtick, yet it muſt ſtill carry the ſemblance and appearance of good (otherwiſe it can neither move the appetite nor pleaſe it, and conſequently be neither an object of deſire nor of fruition;) and if ſo, the happineſs muſt needs be real; becauſe the formality of the object, tho' 'twere never ſo true and real a good, would notwithſtanding lie in the appearance, not in the reality: Whether it be real or no, is purely accidental: For, ſince to be happy, can be nothing elſe but to enjoy ſomething which I deſire, the object of my happineſs muſt needs be enjoy'd under the ſame formality as 'tis deſired. Now ſince 'tis deſired only as apparently good, it muſt needs pleaſe me when obtained under the ſame notion. So that it matters not to the reality of my happineſs, whether the object of it be really good, or only apprehended ſo; ſince if it were never ſo real, it pleaſes only as apparent. The fool has his paradiſe as well as the wiſe man, and for the time is as happy in it; and a kind deluſion, will make a cloud as pleaſing as the Queen of Heaven. And therefore

I think it impoſſible, for man to think himſelf happy, and (during that perſuaſion) not really to be ſo. He enjoys the creature of his own fancy, worſhips the idol of his imagination; and the happieſt man upon earth does no more; For let the circumſtances of his life be what they will, 'tis his opinion only that muſt give the reliſh. Without this, Heaven it ſelf would afford him no content, nor the viſion of God prove beatifick. 'Tis true, the man is ſeated at the ſpring-head of happineſs, is ſurrounded with excellent objects; but alas, it appears not ſo to him; he is not at all affected with his condition, but like *Adam*, lies faſt in a dead ſleep in the midſt of paradiſe.

7. The ſum of this argument is this; good is in the ſame manner the object of fruition, as 'tis of deſire; and that is not as really good in its own nature, but as 'tis judged ſo by the underſtanding: And conſequently, tho' it be only apparent, it muſt needs be as effectual to gratifie the appetite, as it was at firſt to excite it during that appearance. So long as it keeps on its vizor, and impoſes upon the underſtanding, what is wanting in the thing, is made up by an obliging impoſture; and ignorance becomes here the mother of happineſs, as well as of devotion: But if the man will dare to be wiſe, and too curiouſly examine the ſuperficial tinſel good, he undeceives himſelf to his own coſt; and like *Adam*, adventuring to eat of the tree of knowledge, ſees himſelf naked, and is aſhamed. And for this reaſon, I think it impoſſible for any man to love to be flatter'd: 'Tis true, he may delight to hear himſelf commended by thoſe who indeed do flatter him; but the true reaſon of that is, becauſe he does not apprehend that to be flattery, which indeed is ſo; but when he once throughly knows it, 'tis im-

poſſible he ſhould be any longer delighted with it. I ſhall conclude this point with this uſeful reflection, that ſince every man's happineſs depends wholly upon his own opinion, the foundation upon which all envious men proceed, muſt needs be either falſe or very uncertain. Falſe, if they think that outward circumſtances and ſtates of life, are all the ingredients of happineſs; but uncertain however; For ſince they meaſure the happineſs of other men by their own opinion, 'tis mere chance if they do not miſplace their envy; unleſs they were ſure the other perſon was of the like opinion with themſelves. And now what a vain irrational thing is it, to diſquiet our ſelves into a diſlike of our own condition, merely becauſe we miſtake another man's.

8. Thus far of the notion of happineſs in general; I now proceed to conſider that happineſs which is ὑγιὴς καὶ ὁλόκληρος, ſound and entire, perfect and compleat. Concerning the general notion of which, all men, I ſuppoſe, are as much agreed, as they are in the idea of a triangle: That 'tis ſuch a ſtate than which a better cannot be conceiv'd: In which there is no evil you can fear, no good which you deſire and have not: That which fully and conſtantly ſatisfies the demand of every appetite, and leaves no poſſibility for a deſire of change; or to ſum it up in that comprehenſive expreſſion of the Poet,

Quod ſis eſſe velis, nihilque malis.

When you would always be what you are, and (as the Earl of *Roſcommon* very ſignificantly renders it) do rather nothing.

9. This I ſuppoſe is the utmoſt that can be ſaid, or conceiv'd of it; and leſs than this will not be enough.

enough. And thus far we are all agreed. For I ſuppoſe, the many various diſputes maintained by philoſophers concerning happineſs, could not reſpect this general notion of it; but only the particular cauſes or means whereby it might be acquired. And I find *Tully* *Lib. 3. de Fin.* concurring with me in the ſame obſervation, *Ea eſt beata vita* (ſays he) *quærimus autem non quæ ſit ſed unde.* The difficulty is not to frame a conception of a perfectly happy ſtate in the general, but to define in particular wherein it conſiſts.

10. But before I undertake this province, I think it might not be amiſs to remove one prejudice; which, becauſe it has gain'd upon my ſelf ſometimes, in my melancholy retirements, I know not but that it may be incident to other men alſo. It is this, whether after ſo many diſputes about, ſo many reſtleſs endeavours after this ſtate of perfect happineſs, there be any ſuch thing or no. Whether it be not a mere idea, as imaginary as *Plato*'s commonwealth, as fictious as the groves of *Elyſium*. I confeſs, this ſuſpicion is enough to overcaſt ones mind with black thoughts, damp ones devotion, and as it were, clip the wings of the moſt aſpiring ſoul. And one is tempted to fall into it upon a ſerious reflection on the nature of fruition in the ſeveral periods and circumſtances of human life. For I obſerv'd, according to my narrow experience, that I never had in all my life, the ſame thoughts of any good in the very time of enjoying it, as I had before. I have known, when I have promiſed my ſelf vaſt ſatisfactions, and my imagination has preſented me at a diſtance, with a fair landskip of delight; yet when I drew nigh to graſp the alluring happineſs, like the ſenſitive plant, it contracted it ſelf at the touch, and ſhrink'd almoſt to nothing in

the fruition. And tho' after the enjoyment is paſt, it ſeems great again upon reflection, as it did before in expectation, yet ſhould a platonical revolution make the ſame circumſtances recur, I ſhould not think ſo. I found 'twas ever with me, as with the traveller, to whom the ground which is before him, and that which he has left behind him, ſeems always more curioſly embroider'd and delightſome, than that which he ſtands upon. So that my happineſs, like the time wherein I thought to enjoy it, was always either paſt or to come, never preſent. Methought I could often ſay upon a recollection, how happy was I at ſuch a time! Or when I was in expectation, how happy ſhall I be if I compaſs ſuch a deſign! But ſcarce ever, I am ſo. I was pretty well pleas'd methought, while I expected, while I hoped, till fruition jogg'd me out of my pleaſing ſlumber, and I knew it was but a dream. And this ſingle conſideration is apt to make one; even in the very purſuit after happineſs, and full career of our paſſions, to ſtop ſhort on this ſide of fruition; and to chuſe rather with *Moſes* upon *Mount-Nebo*, to entertain our fancy with a remote proſpect of the happy land, than to go and poſſeſs it and then repine. How then ſhall man be happy, when ſetting aſide all the croſſes of fortune, he will complain even of ſucceſs; and fruition it ſelf ſhall diſappoint him!

11. And this meſancholy reflection, may breed in one a kind of ſuſpicion, that for ought we know it may be ſo in Heaven too. That altho' at this diſtance we may frame to our ſelves ſhining ideas of that bliſsful region; yet when we come to the poſſeſſion of it, we ſhould not find that perfect happineſs there which we expected, but that it would be always to come as it is now, and that we

ſhould

ſhouſd ſeek for Heaven, even in Heaven it ſelf. That we ſhould not fully acquieſce in our condition there, but at length affect a change. In favour of which unhappy Scepticiſm, it may be farther conſider'd that a great number of excellent beings, who enjoyed the very quinteſſence of bliſs, who were as happy as God and Heaven could make them, grew ſoon uneaſie and weary of their ſtate, and left their own habitation. Which argues, that their happineſs was not perfect and compleat, becauſe otherwiſe they would not have deſired a change; ſince that very deſire is an imperfection. And if happineſs be not compleat in Heaven, ſure 'tis impoſſible to be found any where elſe.

12. Before therefore I proceed to define wherein perfect happineſs does conſiſt, I think it neceſſary to endeavour the removal of this ſcruple, which, like the flaming ſword, forbids entrance into paradiſe. In order to which, I ſhall enquire into the true reaſon why theſe ſublunary good things, when enjoyed, do neither anſwer our expectations, nor ſatisfie our appetites. Now this muſt proceed either from the nature of fruition it ſelf, or from the imperfection of it, or from the object of it, or from our ſelves. I confeſs, did this defect proceed from the very nature of fruition (as is ſuppoſed in the objection,) 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be any ſuch thing as perfect happineſs, ſince 'twould faint away while enjoy'd, and expire in our embraces. But that it cannot proceed thence, I have this to offer, becauſe fruition being nothing elſe but an application, or union of the ſoul to ſome good or agreeable object, it is impoſſible that ſhould leſſen the good enjoyed. Indeed it may leſſen our eſtimation of it; but that is, becauſe we do not rightly conſider the nature of things, but promiſe our ſelves

infinite ſatisfactions in the enjoyment of finite objects. We look upon things through a falſe glaſs; which magnifies the object at a diſtance, much beyond its juſt dimenſions. We repreſent our future enjoyments to our ſelves in ſuch favourable and partial ideas, as abſtract from them all the inconveniences and allays, which will really in the event accompany them; and if we thus over-rate our felicities before-hand, 'tis no wonder if they balk our expectations in the fruition. But then it muſt be obſerved, that the fruition does not cauſe this deficiency in the object, but only diſcover it. We have a better inſight into the nature of things near at hand, than when we ſtood afar off; and conſequently, diſcern thoſe defects and imperfections, which, like the qualities of an ill miſtreſs, lay hid all the time of courtſhip, and now begin to betray themſelves, when 'tis come to enjoyment. But this can never happen, but where the object is finite. An infinite object can never be overvalued; and conſequently, cannot fruſtrate our expectations.

13. And as we are not to charge fruition with our diſappointments, but our ſelves, (becauſe we are acceſſory to our own deluſion, by taking falſe meaſures of things) ſo neither is the unſatisfactorineſs of any condition to be imputed to the nature of fruition it ſelf; but either to the imperfection of it, or to the finiteneſs of the object. Let the object be never ſo perfect, yet if the fruition of it be in an imperfect meaſure, there will ſtill be room for unſatisfactorineſs; as it appears in our enjoyment of God in this life. Neither can a finite object fully ſatisfie us, tho' we enjoy it never ſo throughly. For ſince to a full ſatisfaction and acquieſcence of mind, 'tis required, that our faculties be always entertained, and we ever enjoying: it is impoſſible a finite

nite object ſhould afford this ſatisfaction, becauſe all the good that is in it, (being finite) is at length run over; and then the enjoyment is at an end. The flower is ſuck'd dry, and we neceſſarily deſire a change. Whenever therefore our enjoyment proves unſatisfying, we may conclude, that either the object is finite, or the fruition imperfect. But then how came the Angels to be diſſatisfy'd with their condition in the regions of light and immortality, when they drank freely of the fountain of life *Rev.* xxi. 6. proceeding out of the throne of God, with whom is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore? Here certainly, there is no room either for the finiteneſs of the object, or the imperfection of fruition. And therefore, their diſſatisfaction can be imputed to no other cauſe, than the nature of fruition in general, which is to leſſen the good enjoyed, as was ſuppoſed in the objection. This I confeſs preſſes hard; and indeed I have but one way to extricate my ſelf from this difficulty; and that is, by ſuppoſing a ſtate of probation in the Angels. That they did not immediately upon their creation enjoy an infinite object, or if they did, yet that 'twas in an imperfect meaſure. For ſhould it be granted, that they were at firſt confirmed in bliſs, and compleatly happy, both in reſpect of fruition and object, as we ſuppoſe they are now; I cannot conceive it poſſible they ſhould be diſſatisfy'd with their condition. This being repugnant to the idea of perfect happineſs.

14. Since then this diſſatisfaction muſt be derived either from the imperfection of the fruition, or the finiteneſs of the object, and not from the nature of fruition in the general, to infer the poſſibility of perfect happineſs, there needs no more to be ſuppoſed, than the exiſtence of a being full fraught with

with infinite inexhauſtible good, and that he is able to communicate to the full. There may be then ſuch a thing as perfect happineſs. The poſſibility of which may alſo be farther proved (tho' not explicated) from thoſe boundleſs deſires, that immortal thirſt every man has after it by nature: Concerning which I obſerve, That nothing does more conſtantly, more inſeparably cleave to our minds, than this deſire of perfect and conſummated happineſs; This is the moſt excellent end of all our endeavours, the great prize, the great hope. This is the mark every man ſhoots at; and tho' we miſs our aim never ſo often, yet we will not, cannot give over, but, like paſſionate lovers, take reſolution from a repulſe. The reſt of our paſſions are much at our own diſpoſal, yield either to reaſon or time; we either argue our ſelves out of them, or at leaſt out-live them. We are not always in love with pomp and grandeur, nor always dazled with the glittering of riches; and there is a ſeaſon when pleaſure it ſelf (that is ſenſible pleaſure) ſhall court in vain: But the deſire of perfect happineſs has no intervals, no viciſſitudes; it out-laſts the motion of the pulſe, and ſurvives the ruins of the grave. *Many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it:* And now certainly, God would never have planted ſuch an ardent, ſuch an importunate appetite in our Souls; and as it were, interwoven it with our very natures, had he not been able to ſatisfie it.

15. I come now to ſhew, wherein this perfect happineſs does conſiſt; concerning which, I affirm in the firſt place, that it is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this life. The greateſt fruition we have of God here, is imperfect; and conſequently unſatisfactory. And as for all other objects,

jects, they are finite; and conſequently, tho' never ſo fully enjoyed, cannot afford us perfect ſatisfaction. No, *Man knoweth not the price thereof: neither is it to be found in the land of the living. The depth ſaith, it is not in me; and the ſea ſaith, it is not in me,* Job xxviii. The vanity of the creature has been ſo copiouſly diſcourſed upon, both by philoſophers and divines, and withal is ſo obvious to every thinking man's experience, that I need not here take an inventory of the creation, nor turn *Eccleſiaſtes* after *Solomon.* And beſides, I have anticipated this argument in what I have ſaid concerning fruition, I ſhall only add one or two remarks concerning the objects of ſecular happineſs, which are not ſo commonly inſiſted upon, to what has been there ſaid. The firſt is this, that the objects wherein men generally ſeek for happineſs here, are not only finite in their nature, but alſo few in number. Indeed, could a man's life be ſo contrived, that he ſhould have a new pleaſure ſtill ready at hand aſſoon as he was grown weary of the old, and every day enjoy a virgin delight; he might then perhaps, like Mr. *Hobbs* his notion, and for a while think himſelf happy in this continued ſucceſſion of new acquiſitions. But alas, nature does not treat us with this variety. The compaſs of our enjoyments is much ſhorter than that of our lives; and there is a periodical circulation of our pleaſures, as well as of our blood.

—Verſamur ibidem atque inſumus uſque;
Nec nova vivendo procuditur ulla voluptas. Lucret.

The enjoyments of our lives run in a perpetual round, like the months in the calendar, but with a quicker revolution; we dance like faries in a circle,

cle, and our whole life is but a nauſeous tautology. We riſe like the Sun, and run the ſame courſe we did the day before; and to morrow is but the ſame over again: So that the greateſt favourite of fortune, will have reaſon often enough to cry out with him in *Seneca*, *Quouſque eadem?* But there is another grievance which contributes to defeat our endeavours after perfect happineſs in the enjoyment of this life; which is, that the objects wherein we ſeek it, are not only finite and few; but that they commonly prove occaſions of greater ſorrow to us, than ever they afforded us content. This may be made out ſeveral ways, as from the labour of getting, the care of keeping, the fear of loſing, and the like topicks, commonly inſiſted on by others; but I wave theſe, and fix upon another account leſs blown upon, and I think more material than any of the reſt. It is this, that altho' the object loſes that great appearance in the fruition which it had in the expectation, yet after it is gone, it reſumes it again. Now we, when we lament the loſs, do not take our meaſures from that appearance which the object had in the enjoyment (as we ſhould do to make our ſorrow not exceed our happineſs) but from that which it has in the reflection; and conſequently, we muſt needs be more miſerable in the loſs, than we were happy in the enjoyment.

16. From theſe, and the like conſiderations, I think it will evidently appear, that this perfect happineſs is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this life. Wherein then does it conſiſt? I anſwer poſitively, in the full and entire fruition of God. He (as *Plato* ſpeaks) is κύριον καὶ ἀρχιτεκτονικὸν τέλος, the proper and principle end of man, the center of our tendency, the ark of our reſt. He is the object which alone can ſatisfie the appetite of the

the moſt capacious ſoul, and ſtand the teſt of fruition to eternity. And to enjoy him fully, is perfect felicity. This in general, is no more than what is deliver'd to us in ſcripture, and was believ'd by many of the heathen philoſophers. But the manner of this fruition requires a more particular conſideration. Much is ſaid by the ſchoolmen on this ſubject, whereof, in the firſt place, I ſhall give a ſhort and methodical account; and then fix upon the opinion'd which I beſt approve of. The firſt thing that I obſerve, is, that 'tis generally agreed upon among them, that this fruition of God conſiſts in ſome operation; and I think with very good reaſon. For as by the objective part of perfect happineſs, we underſtand that which is beſt and laſt, and to which all other things are to be referr'd; ſo by the formal part of it, muſt be underſtood the beſt and laſt habitude of man toward that beſt object, ſo that the happineſs may both ways ſatisfie the appetite; that is, as 'tis the beſt thing, and as 'tis the poſſeſſion, uſe, or fruition of that beſt thing: Now this habitude, whereby the beſt thing is perfectly poſſeſs'd, muſt needs be ſome operation; becauſe operation is the ultimate perfection of every being. Which axiom muſt not be ſo underſtood, as if operation taken by it ſelf, were more perfect than the thing which tends to it; but that every thing with its operation, is more perfect than without it.

17. The next thing which I obſerve, is, that 'tis alſo farther agreed upon among them, that this operation wherein our fruition of God does conſiſt, is an operation of the intellectual part, and not of the ſenſitive. And this I alſo take to be very reaſonable. Firſt, becauſe 'tis generally receiv'd, that the eſſence of God cannot be the object of any of

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our ſenſes. But ſecondly, ſuppoſe it could, yet ſince the operation, wherein our perfect happineſs does conſiſt, muſt be the perfecteſt operation; and ſince that of the intellectual part is more perfect than that of the ſenſitive; it follows, that the operation whereby we enjoy God, muſt be that of the intellectual part only. And therefore ſays *Duns Scotus*, in the 4 of the *Sent. Diſtinct.* 49. *Q.* 4. *Omnes tenentes beatitudinem conſiſtere in operatione, concorditer tenent quod non conſiſtit niſi in operatione aliqua partis intellectivæ, ut diſtinguitur contra partem ſenſitivam, quia ſola potentia immaterialis poteſt per operationem ſuam attingere perfectum bonum in quo ſolo, ut in objecto, eſt beatitudo.*

18. But now whereas the intellectual part of man (as 'tis oppoſed to the ſenſitive) is double, *viz.* that of the underſtanding, and that of the will; this may lay a ground for a great queſtion, in which act or operation of the mind the fruition of God does conſiſt, whether in an act of the underſtanding, which is viſion; or in an act of the will, which is love. And here not to ingage in the diſputes concerning this matter between the *Thomiſts* and *Scotiſts*, I ſhall reſolve the perfect and beatifick fruition of God, partly into viſion, and partly into love. Tho' perhaps viſion may be allow'd to be the radical and principle ingredient of our happineſs, according to that of our Saviour Chriſt (which is the text upon which the great ſchool-divine builds) *This is life eternal, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſent.* Which alſo ſeems to be countenanced by that collect of our church, which ſays, *in knowledge of whom ſtandeth our eternal life.* Theſe are the two arms with which we embrace the divinity, and unite our ſouls to the fair one and the good. Theſe I conceive are both

both ſo eſſential to the perfect fruition of God, that the idea of it can by no means be maintained, if either of them be wanting. For ſince God is both ſupreme truth and infinite goodneſs, he cannot be entirely poſſeſs'd, but by the moſt clear knowledge, and the moſt ardent love. And beſides, ſince the ſoul is happy by her faculties, her happineſs muſt conſiſt in the moſt perfect operation of each faculty. For if happineſs did conſiſt formally in the ſole operation of the underſtanding, or in the ſole operation of the will, the man would not be compleatly, and in all reſpects happy. For how is it poſſible a man ſhould be perfectly happy in loving the greateſt good, if he did not know it; or in knowing it, if he did not love it? And moreover, theſe two operations do ſo mutually tend to the promotion and conſervation of one another, that upon this depends the perpetuity and the conſtancy of our happineſs. For while the bleſſed do πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, face to face contemplate the ſupreme truth and infinite goodneſs, they cannot chuſe but love perpetually; and while they perpetually love, they cannot chuſe but perpetually contemplate. And in this mutual reciprocation of the actions of the ſoul, conſiſts the perpetuity of Heaven, the circle of felicity.

19. Beſides this way of reſolving our fruition of God into viſion and love, there is a famous opinion ſaid to be broacht by *Henricus Gandavenſis*, who upon a ſuppoſition that God could not be ſo fully enjoy'd as is required to perfect happineſs, only by the operations or powers of the ſoul; fancy'd a certain illapſe whereby the divine eſſence did fall in with, and as it were penetrate the eſſence of the bleſſed. Which opinion he endeavours to illuſtrate by this ſimilitude: That as a piece of iron, red hot

hot by reaſon of the illapſe of the fire into it, appears all over like fire; ſo the ſouls of the bleſſed, by this illapſe of the divine eſſence into them, ſhall be all over divine.

20. I think he has ſcarce any followers in this opinion; nor do I well know whether he ever had a leader. For as for the old doctrine of the refuſion or reſorbition of ſouls into God, the great fountain of them, or as ſome perhaps would expreſs it, into the *anima mundi*, which in the ſtoick theology is the ſame with God himſelf, tho' in *Plato*'s, rather the production or effect of God; this ſtoical doctrine (for I know of no ſuch doctrine held by *Plato*) ſeems to be of a nature too different from this illapſe, to be reckon'd as the ſame opinion in another dreſs. But indeed there is a paſſage in *Plotinus*, which ſeems to border very much upon this notion; where deſcribing the happineſs of the ſoul contemplating and enjoying God, he expreſſes it by its being one with him, and by joyning centre to centre, ἕν ἐστιν, ὥσπερ κέντρῳ κέντρον συνάψας. *Ennead. 6. Lib. 9. Cap.* 10. Which occaſion'd his excellent commentator *Ficinus*, to call to mind that of St. *Paul*, *He that is joyned unto the Lord, is one ſpirit.*

21. That ſuch an intimate conjunction with God as is here deſcribed, is poſſible, ſeems to me not abſolutely incredible from the nature of the hypoſtatick union; but whether our fruition of God after this life ſhall conſiſt in it, none know but thoſe happy ſouls who enjoy him; and therefore I ſhall determine nothing before the time. This only I obſerve, that ſhould our fruition of God conſiſt in ſuch an union, or rather penetration of eſſences, that would not exclude, but rather infer thoſe operations of viſion and love as neceſſary to fruition; but on the other hand, there ſeems no ſuch neceſſity

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of this union to the fruition, but that it may be conceiv'd entire without it. And therefore why we ſhould multiply difficulties without cauſe, I ſee no reaſon. For my part, I ſhould think my ſelf ſufficiently happy in the clear viſion of my maker, nor ſhould I deſire any thing beyond the prayer of *Moſes*: *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory*, Exod. xxxiii. 18.

22. For what an infinite ſatisfaction, happineſs and delight it muſt needs be, to have a clear and intimate perception of that primitive and original beauty, perfection and harmony, whereof all that appears fair and excellent, either, to our ſenſes or underſtandings in this life, is but a faint imitation, a pale reflection! To ſee him who is the fountain of all being, containing in himſelf the perfection, not only of all that is, but of all that is poſſible to be, *the alpha and omega, the beginning and ending, the firſt and the laſt, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty!* Rev. i. 8. To ſee him, of whom all nature is the image, of whom all the harmony, both of the viſible and inviſible world, is but the echo! To ſee him, who (as *Plato* divinely and magnificently expreſſes it) is πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ αὐτὸν καθ' αὐτὸν μεθ' αὐτοῦ μονοειδὲς ἀεὶ ὄν. The immence ocean of beauty, which is it ſelf, by it ſelf, with it ſelf, uniform, always exiſting! This certainly will affect the ſoul with all the pleaſing and raviſhing tranſports of love and deſire, joy and delight, wonder and amazement, together with a ſettled acquieſcence and complacency of ſpirit; only leſs infinite than the lovelineſs that cauſes it, and the peculiar complacency of him who rejoyces in his own fulneſs, and the comprehenſions of eternity. We ſee how ſtrangely our ſenſe of ſeeing is affected with the harmony of colours; and our ſenſe

of hearing, with the harmony of ſounds; inſomuch, that ſome have been too weak for the enjoyment, and have been almoſt tranſported beyond themſelves with the ſublimate of pleaſure. And if ſo, what then ſhall we think of the beatifick viſion; the pleaſure of which will ſo far tranſcend that of the other, as God, who is all over harmony and proportion, exceeds the ſweet melody of ſounds and colours; and the perception of the mind is more vigorous, quick and piercing, than that of the ſenſes? This is perfect happineſs, this is the tree of life which grows in the midſt of the paradiſe of God; this is heaven, which while the learned diſpute about, the good only enjoy. But I ſhall not venture to ſoar any longer in theſe heights; I find the æther too thin here to breath in long, and the brightneſs of the region flaſhes too ſtrong upon my tender ſenſe; I ſhall therefore haſten to deſcend from the mount of God, leſt I grow giddy with ſpeculation, and loſe thoſe ſecrets which I have learnt there, the cabala of felicity.

23. And now (Sir) I come to conſider your queſtion, *viz.* Wherein the greateſt happineſs attainable by man in this life, does conſiſt. Concerning which, there is as great variety of opinions among philoſophers, as there is among geographers, about the ſeat of paradiſe. The learned *Varro* reckons up no leſs than 288 ſeveral opinions about it; and yet notwithſtanding the number of writers who have been ſo liberal of their thoughts upon this ſubject to poſterity, they ſeem to have been in the dark in nothing more than in this; and (excepting only a few platoniſts, who placed man's greateſt end in the contemplation of truth) they ſeem to have undertaken nothing ſo unhappily, as when they eſſay'd to write of happineſs. Some meaſure their happineſs

happineſs by the high tide of their riches, as the *Egyptians* did the fertility of the year by the increaſe of the river *Nile*. Others place it in the pleaſures of ſenſe: others in honour and greatneſs. But theſe and the like, were men of the common herd, low groveling ſouls, that either underſtood not the dignity of human nature, or elſe forgot that they were men. But there were others of a diviner genius and ſublimer ſpirit.

Queis meliore luto finxit præcordia Titan.

Who had a more generous blood running in their veins, which made them put a juſt value upon themſelves, and ſcorn to place their greateſt happineſs in that which they ſhould bluſh to enjoy. And thoſe were the Stoicks and the Peripateticks, who both place the greateſt happineſs of this life in the actions of virtue, with this only difference, that whereas the former are contented with naked virtue, the latter require ſome other collateral things to the farther accompliſhment of happineſs; ſuch as are health and ſtrength of body, a competent livelihood, and the like.

24. And this opinion has been ſubſcribed to by the hands of eminent moraliſts in all ages. And as it is venerable for its antiquity, ſo has it gain'd no ſmall authority from the pen of a great modern writer, (*Deſcartes*) who reſolves the greateſt happineſs of this life into the right uſe of the will; which conſiſts in this, that a man have a firm and conſtant purpoſe, always to do that which he ſhall judge to be beſt.

25. I confeſs, the practice of virtue is a very great inſtrument of happineſs; and that there is a great deal more true ſatisfaction and ſolid content

to be found in a conſtant courſe of well-living, than in all the ſoft careſſes of the moſt ſtudied luxury, or the voluptuouſneſs of a *Seraglio*. And therefore, I have oftentimes been exceedingly pleas'd in the reading of a certain paſſage in that divine moraliſt *Hierocles*, where he tells you, that the virtuous man lives much more pleaſantly than the vicious man. "For (ſays he) all pleaſure is the companion of "action, it has no ſubſiſtence of its own, but ac- "companies us in our doing ſuch and ſuch things. "Hence 'tis, that the worſer actions are accom- "panied with the meaner pleaſures. So that the "good man does not only excel the wicked man "in what is good, but has alſo the advantage of "him even in pleaſure, for whoſe ſake alone he is "wicked. For he that chuſes pleaſure with filthi- "neſs, altho' for a while he be ſweetly and delici- "ouſly entertain'd; yet at laſt, thro' the filthineſs "annex'd to his enjoyment, he is brought to a "painful repentance. But now he that prefers vir- "tue with all her labours and difficulties, tho' at "firſt for want of uſe it ſits heavy upon him; yet "by the conjunction of good he alleviates the la- "bour, and at laſt enjoys pure and unallay'd plea- "ſure with his virtue. So that of neceſſity, that "life is moſt unhappy, which is moſt wicked; and "that moſt pleaſant which is moſt virtuous.

26. Now this I readily ſubmit to as a great truth, that the degrees of happineſs vary according to the degrees of virtue; and conſequently, that that life which is moſt virtuous, is moſt happy; with reference to thoſe that are vicious or leſs virtuous, every degree of virtue having a proportionate degree of happineſs accompanying it; (which is all, I ſuppoſe, that excellent author intends.) But I do not think the moſt virtuous life ſo the moſt happy, but that

that it may become happier, unleſs ſomething more be comprehended in the word (virtue) than the Stoicks, Peripateticks, and the generality of other moraliſts underſtand by it. For with them it ſignifies no more but only ſuch a firm ἕξις, or habitude of the will to good, whereby we are conſtantly diſpoſed, notwithſtanding the contrary tendency of our paſſions, to perform the neceſſary offices of life. This they call moral or civil virtue; and although this brings always happineſs enough with it to make amends for all the difficulties which attend the practice of it: Yet I am not of opinion, that the greateſt happineſs attainable by man in this life, conſiſts in it. And ſo that it does not conſiſt in virtue, unleſs virtue be ſo largely underſtood, as to comprehend the contemplative and unitive way of religion, conſiſting in a devout meditation of God, and in affectionate unions and adherencies to him. And which therefore, to diſtinguiſh it from the other, we may call divine virtue, taking the denomination not from the principle, as if it were wholly infuſed into us, and we wholly paſſive in it, but from the object; the object of the former being moral good, and the object of the latter, God himſelf. The former is a ſtate of proficiency, the latter of perfection. The former is a ſtate of difficulty and contention, the latter of eaſe and ſerenity. The former is employ'd in maſtering the paſſions, and regulating the actions of common life, the latter in divine meditation, and the extaſies of ſeraphick love. He that has only the former, is like *Moſes*, with much difficulty climbing up to the holy mount; but he that has the latter, is like the ſame perſon converſing with God on the ſerene top of it, and ſhining with the rays of anticipated glory. So that this latter ſuppoſes the acquiſition of the former, and conſequently, has all the happineſs pertaining to the other, beſides

what it adds of its own. This is the laſt ſtage of humane perfection, the utmoſt round of the ladder whereby we aſcend to Heaven; one ſtep higher is glory. Here then will I build my tabernacle, for it is good to be here. Here will I ſet up my pillar of reſt, here will I fix; for why ſhould I travel on farther in purſuit of any greater happineſs, ſince man in this ſtation is but a little lower than the Angels, one remove from Heaven? Here certainly is the greateſt happineſs, as well as perfection attainable by man in this ſtate of imperfection. For ſince that happineſs, which is abſolutely perfect and complete, conſiſts in the clear and intimate viſion, and moſt ardent love of God; hence we ought to take our meaſures, and conclude that to be the greateſt happineſs attainable in this ſtate, which is the greateſt participation of the other. And that can be nothing elſe but the unitive way of religion, which conſiſts of the contemplation and love of God. I ſhall ſay ſomething of each of theſe ſeverally, and ſomething of the unitive way of religion, which is the reſult of both; and ſo ſhut up this diſcourſe.

27. By contemplation in general (θεωία) we underſtand an application of the underſtanding to ſome truth. But here in this place, we take the word in a more peculiar ſenſe, as it ſignifies an habitual, attentive, ſteady application or converſion of the ſpirit to God, and his divine perfections. Of this the maſters of myſtick theology, commonly make fifteen degrees. The firſt is intuition of truth; the ſecond is a retirement of all the vigour and ſtrength of the faculties into the innermoſt parts of the ſoul; the third is ſpiritual ſilence; the fourth is reſt; the fifth is union; the ſixth is the hearing of the ſtill voice of God; the ſeventh is ſpiritual ſlumber; the eighth is extacy; the ninth is rapture; the

the tenth is the corporeal appearance of Chriſt and the Saints; the eleventh is the imaginary appearance of the ſame; the twelfth is the intellectual viſion of God; the thirteenth is the viſion of God in obſcurity; the fourteenth is an admirable manifeſtation of God; the fifteenth is a clear and intuitive viſion of him, ſuch as St. *Auſtin* and *Tho. Aquinas* attribute to St. *Paul*, when he was rapt up into the third Heaven. Others of them reckon ſeven degrees only, (*viz.*) taſte, deſire, ſatiety, ebriety, ſecurity, tranquillity; but the name of the ſeventh (they ſay) is known only to God.

28. I ſhall not ſtand to examine the ſcale of this diviſion; perhaps there may be a kind of a pythagorick ſuperſtition in the number. But this I think I may affirm in general, that the ſoul may be wound up to a moſt ſtrange degree of abſtraction, by a ſilent and ſteady contemplation of God. *Plato* defines contemplation to be λύσις καὶ χωρισμὸς τ ψυχῆς ἀπὸ [illegible], a ſolution, and a ſeparation of the ſoul from the body. And how far it may be poſſible for a man by mere intention of thought, not only to withdraw the ſoul from all commerce with the ſenſes (which in part is a thing of common experience) but even really to ſeparate it from the body, to untwiſt the ligaments of his frame, and by degrees to reſolve himſelf into the ſtate of the dead, I leave to be conſider'd from what is reported concerning the abſtractions of *Duns Scotus*. The Jews expreſs the manner of the death of *Moſes* by *oſculum oris Dei*, calling it the kiſs of God's mouth; which perhaps may ſignifie that he breath'd out his ſoul by the mere ſtrength and energy of contemplation, and expired in the embraces of his maker. A happy way of dying! How ambitious ſhould I be of ſuch a conveyance, were it practicable? How

paſſionately ſhould I join with the chuch in the canticles: Φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων στόματος αὐτοῦ, *Let him kiſs me with the kiſſes of his mouth*, Cant. 1. 2.

29. But however this be determin'd, certain it is, that there are exceeding great meaſures of abſtraction in contemplation; ſo great, that ſometimes, whether a man be in the body, or out of the body, he himſelf can hardly tell. And conſequently, the ſoul in theſe præludiums of death, theſe neighbourhoods of ſeparation, muſt needs have brighter glimpſes, and more beatifick ideas of God, than in a ſtate void of theſe elevations; and conſequently, muſt love him with greater ardency; Which is the next thing I am to conſider.

30. The love of God in general, may be conſidered either as it is purely intellectual, or as it is a paſſion. The firſt is, when the ſoul, upon an apprehenſion of God as a good, delectable, and agreeable object, joyns her ſelf to him by the will. The latter is, when the motion of the will is accompany'd with a ſenſible commotion of the ſpirits, and an eſtuation of the blood. Some perhaps may think, that 'tis not poſſible for a man to be affected with this ſenſitive love of God, which is a paſſion; becauſe there is nothing in God which falls under our imagination; and conſequently (the imagination being the only medium of conveyance) it cannot be propagated from the intellectual part to the ſenſitive: That none are capable of this ſenſitive paſſionate love of God, but chriſtians, who enjoy the myſtery of the incarnation, whereby they know God has condeſcended ſo far as to cloath himſelf with fleſh, and to become like one of us. But 'tis not the ſophiſtry of the cold logicians, that ſhall work me out of the belief of what I feel and know, and rob me of the ſweeteſt entertainment of life,

the

the paſſionate love of God. Whatever ſome men may pretend, who are ſtrangers to all the affectionate heats of religion, and therefore make their philoſophy a plea for their indevotion, and extinguiſh all holy ardours with a ſyllogiſm; yet I am firmly perſuaded, that our love of God may be not only paſſionate, but even wonderfully ſo, and exceeding the love of women. 'Tis an experimental, and therefore undeniable truth, that paſſion is a great inſtrument of devotion; and accordingly we find, that men of the moſt warm and pathetick tempers and affectionate complections, (provided they have but conſideration enough withal to fix upon the right object) prove the greateſt votaries in religion. And upon this account it is, that to highten our love of God in our religious addreſſes, we endeavour to excite our paſſions by muſick, which would be to as little purpoſe as the fanatick thinks 'tis, if there were not ſuch a thing as the paſſionate love of God. But then as to the objection. I anſwer with the excellent *Deſcartes*, that altho' in God, who is the object of our love, we can imagine nothing, yet we can imagine that our love, which conſiſts in this, that we would unite our ſelves to the object beloved, and conſider our ſelves as it were a part of it. And the ſole idea of this very conjunction, is enough to ſtir up a heat about the heart, and ſo kindle a very vehement paſſion. To which I add, that altho' the beauty or amiableneſs of God, be not the ſame with that which we ſee in corporeal beings, and conſequently, cannot directly fall within the ſphere of the imagination; yet it is ſomething analogous to it; and that very analogy is enough to excite a paſſion. And this I think ſufficient to warrant my general diviſion of the love of God into intellectual and ſenſitive.

31. But

31. But there is a more peculiar acceptation of the love of God proper to this place. And it is that which we call ſeraphick. By which I underſtand in ſhort, that love of God which is the effect of an intenſe contemplation of him. This differs not from the other in kind, but only in degree; and that it does exceedingly, in as much as the thoughtful contemplative man (as I hinted before) has clearer perceptions, and livelier impreſſions of the divine beauty, the lovely attributes and perfection of God, than he whoſe ſoul is more deeply ſet in the fleſh, and lies groveling in the bottom of the dungeon.

32. That the nature of this ſeraphick love may be the better underſtood, I ſhall conſider how many degrees there may be in the love of God. And I think the computation of *Bellarmine*, *lib.* 2. *de monachis*, *cap.* 2. is accurate enough. He makes four. The firſt is to love God proportionably to his lovelineſs, that is, with an infinite love; and this degree is peculiar to God himſelf. The ſecond is to love him, not proportionably to his lovelineſs, but to the utmoſt capacity of a creature; and this degree is peculiar to Saints and Angels in Heaven. The third is to love him not proportionably to his lovelineſs, nor to the utmoſt capacity of a creature, abſolutely conſider'd; but to the utmoſt capacity of a mortal creature in this life. And this (he ſays) is proper to the religious. The fourth is to love him not proportionably to his lovelineſs, nor to the utmoſt capacity of a creature, conſider'd either abſolutely, or with reſpect to this life, but only ſo as to love nothing equally with him or above him. That is, not to do any thing contrary to the divine love. And this is abſolute indiſpenſable duty, leſs than

than which will not qnalifie us for the enjoyment of God hereafter.

33. Now this ſeraphick love which we here diſcourſe of, agrees moſt to the third degree: When a man, after many degrees of abſtraction from the animal life, many a profound and ſteady meditation upon the excellencies of God, ſees ſuch a vaſt ocean of beauty and perfection in him, that he loves him to the utmoſt ſtretch of his power; *When he ſits under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit is ſweet to his taſte.* Cant. ii. 3. When he conſecrates and devotes himſelf wholly to him, and has no paſſion for inferior objects. When he is raviſhed with the delights of his ſervice, and breathes out ſome of his ſoul to him in every prayer. When he is delighted with anthems of praiſe and adoration, more than with marrow and fatneſs, and feaſts upon *Allelujah.* When he melts in a calenture of devotion, and his ſoul *breaketh out with fervent deſire,* Pſal. cxix. When the one thing he delights in, is to converſe with God in the beauty of holineſs; and the one thing he deſires, is to ſee him as he is in Heaven. This is ſeraphick love, and this with contemplation makes up that which the myſtick divines ſtyle the unitive way of religion: It is called ſo, becauſe it unites us to God in the moſt excellent manner that we are capable of in this life. By union here, I do not underſtand that which is local or preſential, becauſe I conſider God as omnipreſent. Neither do I mean an union of grace, (as they call it) whereby we are reconciled to God; or an union of charity at large, whereof it is ſaid, *He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 16. The firſt of theſe being as common to the inanimate things, as to the moſt extaſy'd ſoul upon earth. And the two laſt being common to all good men,

men, who indeed love God, but yet want the excellency of contemplation, and the myſtick union. That union which conſiſts in the moſt intimate adheſion of the ſoul to God, by the moſt affective and vital operations of the will, upon a clear and illuminated ſenſe of his ſuperlative excellence, with a full reſt and acquieſcence in his infinite greatneſs and goodneſs. Here the happy ſoul repoſes her ſelf, and ſays, *It is good to be here.* Here ſhe dyes, and here ſhe lives; here ſhe loſes, and here ſhe finds her ſelf. And in this ſtate, as being a certain preguſtation of glory, the greateſt happineſs of this life may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to conſiſt. Which ſtate is thus repreſented by the excellent Biſhop *Taylour*: "It is (ſays he) a prayer of quietneſs "and ſilence, and a meditation extraordinary; a "diſcourſe without variety; a viſion and intuition "of divine excellencies; an immediate entry into "an orb of light, and a reſolution of all our faculties into ſweetneſs, affections, and ſtarings upon "the divine beauty. And is carried on to extaſies, "raptures, ſuſpenſions, elevations, abſtractions, and "apprehenſions beatifical. *Great Exemplar.* p. 60

34. I make no doubt, but that many an honeſt, pious ſoul arrives to the heavenly *Canaan*, who is not fed with this Manna in the wilderneſs. But though every one muſt not expect theſe antepaſts of felecity that is virtuous, yet none elſe muſt. Paradiſe was never open but to a ſtate of innocence. But neither is that enough. No, this mount of God's preſence is fenced not only from the profane, but alſo from the moderately virtuous. 'Tis the privilege of angelical diſpoſitions, and the reward of eminent piety, and an excellent religion, to be admitted to theſe divine repaſts, theſe feaſts of love. And here I place the greateſt happineſs attainable

attainable by man in this life, as being the neareſt approach to the ſtate of the bleſſed above, the outer court of Heaven.

35. Theſe (Sir) are my thoughts concerning happineſs. I might have ſpun them out into a greater length, but I think a little plat of ground thick ſown, is better than a great field, which for the moſt part of it lies fallow. I have endeavour'd to deliver my notions with as much perſpicuity, and in as good method as I could, and ſo to anſwer all the ends of copiouſneſs, with the advantage of a ſhorter cut. If I appear ſingular in any of my notions, you are not to aſcribe it altogether to an affectation of novelty; but the reaſon may be, becauſe in the compoſing of this diſcourſe (part of which, I think, had its birth in a garden) I conſulted my own experimental notices of things, and private reflections as much, if not more than the writings of others. So that if ſometimes I happen to be in the road, and ſometimes in a way by my ſelf, 'tis no wonder. I affect neither the one nor the other, but write as I think. Which as I do at other times, ſo more eſpecially when I ſubſcribe my ſelf,

SIR,

All-Souls College, Yours moſt affectionately,
Apr. 18. 1683. *J. N.*

A Reſolution relating to a paſſage in the foregoing Treatiſe.

By way of Letter.

SIR,

1. THE kind entertainment which you gave my *Idea of Happineſs*, does not only encourage, but

but oblige me to endeavour the ſatisfaction of that ſcruple, which the peruſal of it has occaſion'd.

2. You ſay you ſhould like my notion concerning the reality of that which is uſually call'd imaginary happineſs, that is, (as you well explain both your own and my meaning) that altho' the object may be an imaginary good, yet the happineſs which conſiſts in the fruition of that object, will not be imaginary too, but real; and conſequently, that 'tis impoſſible for a man to ſeem to himſelf to be happy, and not to be really ſo, all happineſs conſiſting in opinion. This notion, you ſay, you ſhould like rarely well, could you free your ſelf from one difficulty which it engages you upon; (*viz.*) That hereafter, in the ſtate of glory, either one Saint ſhall think himſelf as happy as another, or not; if not, this muſt needs occaſion envy or diſcontent; but if one ſhall think himſelf as happy as another, then, according to my hypotheſis, that opinion is the meaſure of happineſs, 'twill follow, that he will already be ſo; and this brings in equality of happineſs, which you look upon (and I think juſtly too) as another abſurdity.

3. I confeſs, Sir, this argument is pretty ſubtle and ſurprizing; but I conceive the knots of it may be untied by this anſwer. Firſt, it may be juſtly queſtion'd, whether the firſt part of your dilemma be neceſſarily attended with the appendant abſurdity. 'Tis true indeed, not to think ones ſelf as happy as another, is the ſpring of envy or diſcontent, among men in this world; but whether this be the genuine and conſtant effect of that conſideration, or whether it ought not rather to be aſcribed to the preſent infirmities and imperfections of human nature, may admit diſpute. Nay, I rather think that ſo indeed it muſt be accounted for, and

that

that ſuch a conſideration would not be productive of ſuch an effect in Heaven, conſidering the perfect charity of the Saints, and their as perfect ſubmiſſion to the divine will. But in caſe this abſurdity ſhould inſeparably cleave to the firſt part, then I betake my ſelf to the latter, that in Heaven one Saint ſhall think himſelf as happy as another. Then, according to my own notion (ſay you) it will follow, that he is really ſo. No, I deny the conſequence, the invalidity of which will plainly appear, by diſtinguiſhing the ambiguity of the phraſe. For this expreſſion, one Saint thinks himſelf as happy as another, may be taken in a double ſenſe; either that he thinks himſelf as happy as he himſelf thinks that other; or, that he thinks himſelf as happy as that other thinks himſelf. I grant, ſhould one Saint think himſelf as happy as another in this latter ſenſe of the phraſe, he would, according to my hypotheſis, really be ſo; ſo that this would bring in equality. And therefore in this ſenſe, I deny the propoſition; and that without the leaſt danger of ſplitting upon the firſt abſurdity. But for the former ſenſe, that has no ſuch levelling quality; for to ſay that I think my ſelf as happy as I think another, amounts to no more than this, that in my apprehenſion another does not exceed me in happineſs: But tho' he does not in my apprehenſion, yet he may in reality; for tho' my opinion gives meaſures to my own happineſs, yet it does not to another man's. So that one Saint may be ſaid to think himſelf as happy as another in the former ſenſe, without equalling the happineſs of the bleſſed; tho', I confeſs, I ſhould much rather adhere to the contrary propoſition, (*viz.*) That one ſhall not think himſelf as happy as another, in caſe ſuch an opinion be not neceſſarily attended with envy or diſcontent,

diſcontent, as I think it is not. Becauſe it ſeems unreaſonable to make them ignorant of the degrees of one another's bliſs, unleſs that ignorance be neceſſarily required to prevent the alledg'd abſurdities. But I determine nothing in this point; my buſineſs was only to break the force of your dilemma, and to ſhew that my notion does not involve you in the difficulty ſuppoſed. This, Sir, is all that I think neceſſary to ſay to a perſon of your apprehenſion; and therefore I end theſe nice ſpeculations with this profitable reflection, that although the notion of happineſs be intricate and obſcure, yet the means of attaining it are plain; and therefore 'twould be moſt adviſable both for you and me, chiefly to apply our ſelves to the latter here; and and we ſhall underſtand the former with the beſt ſort of knowledge, that of experience, hereafter.

Yours,

J. N.

An Account of PLATO's Ideas, and of Platonick Love.

By way of Letter.

Tanta vis in Ideis conſtituitur, ut niſi his intellectis, ſapiens eſſe nemo poſſit. S. Aug.

SIR,

1. WERE not I as well acquainted with your ſingular modeſty, as I am with your intellectual accompliſhments, I ſhould readily conclude,

clude, that your directing your enquiries to me, proceeded not ſo much from a curioſity to improve your own knowledge, as to try mine. But when I conſider, that you are ignorant of nothing ſo much as of your own worth and abilities, I begin to think it poſſible that you may propoſe theſe queſtions, even to me, out of a deſire to be inform'd. Which way ſoever it is, I acknowledge my ſelf to be obliged to you for affording me an opportunity of ſerving you, eſpecially in ſuch an inſtance, where I cannot gratifie your requeſt without humouring my own genius at the ſame time. For indeed to my apprehenſion, there is not a finer or more ſublime piece of ſpeculation in all *Plato*'s philoſophy, than that of his ideas, and that of his love; tho' it has undergone the ſame hard fate with many other excellent theories; firſt to be either ignorantly miſunderſtood, or maliciouſly miſrepreſented; and then popularly vilify'd and decry'd.

2. To do right therefore to the name of this great man, as well as to ſatisfie your demands, I ſhall firſt propoſe the general miſtake, and then rectifie it; firſt, preſent you with the ſuppoſed opinion of *Plato*; and then with the true and genuine one. I begin with his ideas, by which 'tis taken for granted by the generality of writers, eſpecially thoſe of the Peripatetick order, that he underſtood univerſal natures, or abſtract eſſences, ſubſiſting eternally by themſelves, ſeparate both from the mind of God and all ſingular beings; according to which, as ſo many patterns, all ſingulars are form'd. As for inſtance; that a man, not this or that in particular, but an univerſal man, or a man in general, ſhould exiſt by it ſelf eternally, according to which all particular men were made. And accordingly it is gravely advanced, that univerſals are not Platonick

ideas, or certain real forms ſeparated from particular things, and that becauſe there are no ſuch ſeparate forms, ſince nothing exiſts in nature, but what is particular, as if *Plato* had ever held that there did. Sir, I ſuppoſe you can hardly forbear ſmiling at the oddneſs of the conceit; but as ridiculous as you may think it, 'tis ſaid to be maintained by no leſs a man than *Plato*; and has been thought of that moment too, that multitudes of great men have ſet themſelves very ſeriouſly to confute it, as a dangerous Hereſie; and have oppoſed it with as much zeal, as ever St. *Auſtin* did the *Manichees*, or the *Pelagians*.

3. But now, that this opinion was not only for its abſurdity and contradictiouſneſs unworthy of the contemplative and refin'd ſpirit of *Plato*; but was alſo apparently none of his, I preſume any capable perſon will be convinc'd, that ſhall heedfully and impartially examine and compare the works of *Plato*; and it can hardly be ſuppoſed that *Ariſtotle*, who had been his auditor for twenty years, ſhould be ignorant of this; ſo that perhaps *Plato* might have too much reaſon for complaining as he does of his ſcholars diſingenuity in theſe words, Ἀειτοτέλης ἡμᾶς ἀπελάκτισε καθαπερεὶ τὰ τραλδεια γυνδέντα ἢ μητέρας, as is recorded by *Laertius* in the life of *Ariſtotle*.

4. And now, that the groſſneſs of this abuſe may the more fully appear, I will in the next place preſent you with another ſenſe of *Plato*'s Ideas; and ſuch, as by ſome little acquaintance with the principles of the Platonick philoſophy, I have reaſon to think, to be the true and genuine one. Know then, that *Plato* conſidering the world as an effect of an intellectual agent, and that in the operations of all other artificers or rational efficients, there muſt be ſome form in the mind of the artificer preſuppoſed

to

to the work (for otherwiſe, what difference will there be between a fortuitous effect, and an intended one; and how comes the effect to be of this ſpecies rather than another?) thought it neceſſary to ſuppoſe eternal forms, models or patterns, of all the ſpecies of being in nature, exiſting in the mind of God. And theſe he calls ideas. I ſay, exiſting in the mind of God: For as for ideas ſubſiſting ſeparately by themſelves out of the divine mind or eſſence, I know no good reaſon to believe, that *Plato* ever maintain'd any ſuch ſpectres and ghoſts of entity. But what he really thought concerning this matter himſelf, he is beſt able to inform us. In his *Timæus*, which is *Plato*'s book of *Geneſis*, where he profeſſedly treats of the nature of things, and gives an account of the origin of the world; he firſt of all enquires whether it was always, or whether it began from ſome principle? To which having anſwered γέγονεν, that it was made, &c. he next enquires, according to what pattern or exemplar, whether according to that which is always one and the ſame, or according to that which is made. To which his anſwer is, that ſince the world is fair, and the Maker of it good, it is manifeſt that he had regard to that exemplar which is eternal. Πρὸς τὸ ἀΐδιον ἔβλεπεν. For, ſays he, the world is the faireſt of effects, and God the beſt of cauſes. Ὁ μὲν δὴ, κάλλιστος τῶν γεγονότων, ὁ δ' ἄριστος τῶν αἰτίων. And thereupon he concludes again, that the world was made according to an exemplar, that was always one and the ſame, or eternal; and that was contain'd in reaſon and wiſdom; λόγῳ and φρονήσει θείᾳ πρὸς. Now what ſhould this be, but thoſe ideal reaſons or patterns of things which are in the divine nature? But that it muſt needs be ſo, appears plainly from the anſwer he makes to the next enquiry, which is concerning

the impulsive cause which moved God to make the world. To which his answer is, that he that made the world was good, and that he that is so, cannot be capable of envying at any thing. And that therefore being free from all envy, he would have all things made as like, or as near approaching to himself as might be. Παρεμπλήσια αυτῷ. So that 'tis plain, that himself was the idea or exemplar of them. Which he must also be presumed to mean, when he speaks of time, and the Heavens being made according to the exemplar of the eternal nature, κατὰ τὸ παράδειγμα τῆς αἰωνίου φύσεως. But what eternal nature is there besides God? And accordingly, speaking of some forms of things, he says (as his interpreter *Serranus* renders him) that they were so made, as God had from eternity described in himself. Ὥσπερ ἀπεικάζετο. To the like purpose, in his *Timæus Locrus*, he has this memorable passage concerning the world, that it remains always incorruptible; and that it is the best of the things that are generated, because it was made by the best cause, proposing to himself, or regarding, not exemplars made by hands, but an idea, and intelligible essence. Ἀφορῶντος εἰς τὴν ἰδέαν καὶ τὴν νοητὴν οὐσίαν. At the end of which book, he has this remarkable passage concerning the animals of the world, that they were made according to the best image of the eternal and intelligible form, according to the interpretation of *Serranus*. And these ideas in the Platonick philosophy, are τὰ πρῶτα νοητὰ, the first intelligibles, and τὰ ὄντων μέτρα, the measures of the things that are; and that because as all things were form'd according to these intelligible platforms, so their truth is to be measur'd by their conformity to them. And in this sense must be taken that common axiom of the schools, that the truth of a thing is its conformity with

with the divine intellect; for it is in no other ſenſe intelligible, as you will diſcern by and by.

5. But now, leſt you ſhould imagine that this Platonick hypotheſis of ideas exiſting in the divine mind, ſhould ill comport with the ſimplicity of God, or claſh with that approved doctrine of the ſchools, *nihil eſt in Deo quod non ſit Deus*; you are to underſtand, that *Plato* by his ideas, does not mean any real eſſence diſtinct from the divine eſſence, but only the divine eſſence it ſelf, as it is variouſly imitable or participable by created beings; and conſequently, according to the multifariouſneſs of this imitability, ſo are the poſſibilities of being. And this will ſerve to help us out with another difficulty; for whereas the divine ideas are not only the exemplary cauſes of things, but alſo (which is conſequent to the former) the meaſure of their truth; this may ſeem to fall in with their opinion, who make all truth dependent upon the ſpeculative underſtanding of God; that is, that God does not underſtand a thing ſo, becauſe it is ſo in its own nature, but that a thing is therefore ſo, becauſe God is pleas'd ſo to underſtand it. Which is an opinion full of miſchief and abſurdity, as you may ſee compendiouſly, and yet evidently demonſtrated in Dr. *Ruſt*'s little diſcourſe of truth. Now for the clearing this difficulty, 'tis to be obſerved, that the intellect of God, as a Platoniſt of note remarks, may be diſtinguiſh'd into νοῦς νοερὸς, and νοῦς νοητὸς, the counterpart whereof in Engliſh, is conceptive and exhibitive. By the mind of God exhibitive, is meant the eſſence of God, as thus or thus imitable, or participable by any creature; and this is the ſame with an idea. By the mind of God conceptive, is meant a reflex act of God's underſtanding upon his own eſſence as exhibitive, or as thus and thus imitable. Now if you

conſider the divine underſtanding as conceptive or ſpeculative, it does not make its object, but ſuppoſe it ; (as all ſpeculative underſtanding does) neither is the truth of the object to be meaſured from its conformity with that, but the truth of that from its conformity with its object.

But if you conſider the divine underſtanding as exhibitive, then its truth does not depend upon its conformity with the nature of things ; but on the contrary, the truth of the nature of things depends upon its conformity with it. For the divine eſſence is not thus or thus imitable, becauſe ſuch and ſuch things are in being ; but ſuch and ſuch things are in being, becauſe the divine eſſence is thus and thus imitable ; for had not the divine eſſence been thus imitable, ſuch and ſuch beings would not have been poſſible. And thus are they to be underſtood who found the truth of things upon their conformity with the divine ideas ; and thus muſt the ſchools mean too, by that forementiond axiom concerning tranſcendental truth, if they will ſpeak ſenſe, as I noted above.

6. And now, Sir, from *Plato*'s ideas thus amiably ſet forth, the tranſition methinks, is very natural to love. And concerning this, I ſhall account in the ſame method : Firſt, by pointing out the popular miſapprehenſion about it ; and then by exhibiting a true notion of it. Platonick love is a thing in every bodies mouth ; but I ſcarce find any that think or ſpeak accurately of it. By platonick love ſeems generally to be meant, a love that terminates in it ſelf ; I do not mean, that has no object, but that does not proceed to the enjoyment of its object. And accordingly, he is ſaid to love platonically, or to be a platonick lover, that does *caſſo delectamine amare*, that loves at a diſtance ; not proceeding

ceeding to the fruition of the object, but chuſing to dwell in the ſuburbs, repoſing himſelf in his love, and pleaſing himſelf with remote proſpects, with the entertainments of expectation, and ſo makes a miſtreſs of his own deſire. Indeed the continual diſappointment of fruition, and the vanity of all created good, where the expectation is always ſo much greater than the actual enjoyment, may perhaps ſerve with too much reaſon to plead for, and recommend ſuch a ſort of love as this is. But why this ſhould be call'd by the name of platonick love, the beſt reaſon that I know of, is becauſe people will have it ſo. That dialogue wherein *Plato* treats of love, is indeed very myſtical and allegorical; where under the veil of figures and ſimilitudes, after the manner of the old philoſophers and poets, he repreſents a great deal of philoſophick truth. But if his interpreter *Serranus* underſtands him rightly, the main of his notion ſeems reducible to theſe two things. Firſt, he conſiders the nature of love, by which he means the ſame as the appetite of happineſs, or the deſire of ſelf-preſervation, or that inclination which all creatures naturally have of obtaining their own proper good; which indeed is the moſt general and adequate notion of love. Then having deſcribed the nature of love, he comes next to explain its office, and to ſhew (as he does at large) how many, and how great advantages ariſe to us from it. Of which the laſt and the greateſt is this, how we may gradually aſcend from the many fairs to the chief fair, that is to God, in whom is true felicity. That theſe fairs which are expoſed to our eyes, are ſo to be look'd upon and loved, not that we ſhould ſtick in them; but that by them, as by ſo many ſteps, we ſhould aſcend to him who is the very idea of beauty, and who is the cauſe of all

that is fair, that is to God, the chief good. So that the thing principally intended by *Plato* in his love, and conſequently that which we are chiefly to underſtand by what we call Platonick love, is the aſcent of the ſoul to God by the ſteps of inferior and ſubordinate beauties; which ſteps, according to *Plato's* own account, are thus diſpoſed. From the beauty of bodies to the beauty of the ſoul, from the beauty of the ſoul to the beauty that is in the offices of life and laws, and from thence to the beauty that is in the ſciences; and laſtly, from the beauty of the ſciences, to the immenſe ocean of beauty, that is God, of whom he gives a very noble and magnificent deſcription, calling him, αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ μεθ' αὐτοῦ, μονοειδὲς ἀεὶ ὄν, magnifying the happineſs of him that ſhall enjoy him. Nor ought it to be thought ſtrange, that ſo great a philoſopher ſhould inculcate ſo much the love of beauty, ſince how mean a paſſion ſoever the love of beauty may be, as it is accompanied with a deſire of corporal contact; yet certainly, beauty it ſelf abſtractly conſider'd, is a thing of a very refin'd and exalted excellence, not unworthy of the moſt philoſophical regard, as conſiſting in harmony and proportion, and being an emanation of the divine brightneſs, a ray of God. *Plato* indeed does not (as I know of) ſo call it, but he ſays, what is equivalent to it, when he makes all other fairs to be ſo by participation from God. Τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα καλὰ ἐκείνου μετέχοντα. Sir, I might enlarge upon theſe things, but I think it will be for your better entertainment to be remitted to your own thoughts, ſome of which I hope will be, that I am entirely at your ſervice and devotion.

J. Norris.

A Letter concerning Love and Muſick.

SIR,

1. TO the firſt of your enquiries concerning the true idea of love, and particularly that between man and woman, and wherein it ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from luſt, my anſwer in ſhort is this, that love may be conſider'd either barely as a tendency toward good, or as a willing this good to ſomething capable of it. If love be taken in the firſt ſenſe, 'tis what we call deſire; if in the ſecond, 'tis what we call charity, or benevolence.

2. Then as to deſire, there is either an intellectual or a ſenſual deſire, which denomination is not here taken from the faculty, (ſince in that reſpect all deſire is intellectual) but from the quality of the object. That I call here an intellectual deſire, whoſe object is an intellectual good; and that a ſenſual deſire, whoſe object is a ſenſual good. And this is that which *Plato* either meant, or ſhould have meant, by his two loves, or *Cupids*, the celeſtial and the vulgar. The latter of theſe is what we call luſt.

3. But then this again ſignifies either abſtractly and indifferently, *viz.* a bare deſire of corporal pleaſure, or elſe concretely and immorally, *viz.* a deſire or longing after corporeal pleaſure in forbidden and unlawful inſtances.

4. Theſe things being thus briefly premiſed, my next reſolution is this: That the ordinary paſſion of love, that which we mean when we ſay, ſuch a man, or ſuch a woman is in love, is no other than plain luſt, if luſt be taken according to the firſt ſignification; namely, for a ſenſual deſire, or a tendency

dency toward a ſenſual good. But if luſt be taken in the latter ſenſe, as a deſire of corporeal pleaſure in unlawful inſtances, that which our Saviour meant when he ſaid, *He that looks upon a woman to luſt after her*, &c. Then 'tis not neceſſary that the paſſion we here ſpeak of ſhould be luſt; becauſe then 'twould be a ſin to be in love, and conſequently, there would be a neceſſity of ſinning in order to marriage; becauſe no man is ſuppoſed to marry, but whom he thus loves.

5. And now to your ſecond enquiry, whether muſick be a ſenſual or intellectual pleaſure: Before this can be determin'd, the idea of a ſenſual and intellectual pleaſure muſt be ſtated.

6. For the better conceiving of which it is here to be conſider'd, that ſince matter is not capable of thought, it muſt be the ſoul only that is the proper ſubject both of pleaſure and pain. And accordingly it will be neceſſary to ſay that the true difference between intellectual and ſenſual pleaſure does conſiſt not in this, that intellectual pleaſure is that which is perceiv'd by the ſoul, and ſenſual that which is perceiv'd by the body; for the body perceives not at all. Nor yet (as I once repreſented it in this very account) in this, that ſenſual pleaſure is when the body is primarily affected, and the ſoul ſecondarily, or by participation; and that intellectual pleaſure is when the ſoul is primarily affected, and the body ſecondarily, or by participation; (the ſoul being the only true percipient in both) but rather in this, that ſenſual pleaſure is that which the ſoul perceives by the mediation of the body, upon the occaſion of ſome motion or impreſſion made upon it; whereas intellectual pleaſure is that which the ſoul perceives immediately by it ſelf, and from her own thoughts, without any ſuch occaſion from the body.

7. Now

7. Now according to this meaſure it ſeems moſt reaſonable to define the pleaſure of muſick to be properly intellectual. For tho' ſound ſingly and abſolutely conſider'd (which is the material part of muſick) be a ſenſation, that is, a ſentiment in the ſoul reſulting from ſome movement of the body, and ſo the pleaſure that ariſes from the hearing it be accordingly a ſenſual pleaſure, as truly, tho' not ſo groſly, as ſmelling or taſting is; yet the harmony and proportion of ſounds (which is that wherein muſick formally conſiſts) is an abſtract and intelligible thing, and the pleaſure of it ariſes not from any bodily movement, (as the other does) but from the ſoul it ſelf contemplating the beauty and agreement of it. To which beauty and agreement, that it is in ſounds is purely accidental, ſince the ſoul would be pleaſed with the ſame proportion whereever it finds it. Nor is it proper to ſay that we hear muſick; that which we hear is only the ſound, which is a ſenſation in our ſelves; but the muſick part we properly think and contemplate as an intelligible beauty, in like manner as we do the beauty of truth. And conſequently, the pleaſure of it muſt be as much intellectual as that of the other is. To all which it may be added in the laſt place, that muſick conſiſting formally in proportion, and proportion pleaſing only as underſtood; the pleaſure of it muſt needs be intellectual, as reſulting from thought and underſtanding, as all other intellectual pleaſures do.

8. And thus, Sir, you have my ſentiments, with as much brevity and clearneſs as I could uſe, and it may be, as the matters would bear. I have now nothing farther to add, but to renew the aſſurances of my being

Your Friend and Servant,

J. N.

A Letter concerning Friendſhip.

SIR,

1. TO your queſtion, whether in propriety of ſpeaking, there may be a ſtrict friendſhip between a man and his wife? I anſwer firſt, that the ſolution of this queſtion depends upon another, *viz.* What are the requiſites eſſentially neceſſary to the exerciſe of friendſhip? And this queſtion likewiſe depends upon another, *viz.* What is the true notion or idea of friendſhip? This being rightly ſtated, 'twill be eaſy to diſcern what are the eſſential requiſites; and conſequently, whether man and wife are capable terms in this relation or no?

2. Now as to the idea of friendſhip, I anſwer firſt in general, that friendſhip is nothing elſe but benevolence or charity, under ſome certain modifications, or accidental circumſtances. Accidental I mean as to charity, though neceſſary and eſſential to friendſhip. But now what theſe certain modifications are, is next to be conſider'd. 'Twould be too tedious a work to inſiſt here upon other mens opinions; and therefore I ſhall only briefly deliver my own, which is, that all the modifications of charity neceſſary to the conſtitution of friendſhip, may be well enough reduced to theſe three: 1. That it be in a ſpecial manner intenſe. 2. That it be mutual; and 3. That it be manifeſt, or mutually known. Charity, when clothed with theſe three modifications, immediately commences friendſhip. More than theſe it need not have, but of theſe not one may be ſpared, as will eaſily appear, if you examine them ſeverally.

3. Now

3. Now from this idea of friendſhip 'tis very obvious to deduce what are the requiſites neceſſary to friendſhip, not in reference to its idea (for that's already ſtated) but in reference to its exiſtence and actual exerciſe; that is, in one word, what are thoſe diſpoſitions or aptneſſes in the ſubject, whether as to perſon, ſtate, or condition, which may render it capable of friendſhip, according to the forementioned idea. Now, I ſay, what theſe are may be eaſily collected from the Idea it ſelf, as will appear, if we conſider it diſtinctly, according to thoſe three modifications. For Firſt, whereas friendſhip is ſaid to be charity in a ſpecial manner intenſe; hence I collect firſt, that it cannot be but between good men, becauſe an ill man cannot have any true charity, much leſs ſuch an intenſe degree of it, as is requiſite to friendſhip. So that virtue in general is one requiſite. Secondly, Hence I collect, that a friend muſt not be only according to the character *Lucan* gives of *Cato*——*rigidi ſervator honeſti*, rigidly virtuous and honeſt; but he muſt be alſo χρηςὸς ἀνὴρ, a man of a liberal, ſweet, obliging temper; one of thoſe good men of whom 'tis ſaid in Scripture, (by way of contradiſtinction to the righteous, or rigidly honeſt) that ſome would even dare to dye for them. For tho' I may have common charity; nay more, a great eſteem for a man of plain honeſty and integrity, yet I can never love him with that ſpecial intenſeneſs of affection which belongs to friendſhip, unleſs he be alſo of a beneficent, kind and obſequious temper. So that good nature is another requiſite. Thirdly, hence I collect, that there muſt be alſo (at leaſt in a competent proportion) an agreeableneſs of humours and manners; for unleſs the materials be of an apt and correſpondent figure, the building can neither be compact nor laſting; ſo that

that likeneſs of diſpoſition is another requiſite. 4. Hence I collect, that true friendſhip cannot be among many. For ſince our faculties are of a finite energy, 'tis impoſſible our love can be very intenſe when divided among many. No: the rays muſt be contracted to make them burn. So that another requiſite is, that the terms of this relation be few in number.

4. Theſe are all the requiſites that I can think of at preſent, deducible from the firſt part of the idea, (*viz.* Charity in a ſpecial manner intenſe:) As for fidelity in retaining ſecrets, conſtancy of adherence, and the like, I think they are virtually included in the firſt requiſite; it being hardly conceivable how a man can be good and virtuous that wants them. But if you think the reduction not ſo obvious, you may if you pleaſe, add them here in the fifth place as diſtinct requiſites; 'twill be all one. Thus far of the requiſites deducible from the firſt part.

5. To proceed. Whereas it is farther ſaid, that friendſhip is a benevolence that's mutual, there is but one general requiſite deducible from this, which is, that all the other be found in both (or if more) in all the perſons ſuppoſed to be friends. The third of which importing relation, will of neceſſity be ſo; for all ſimilitude is mutual. Laſtly, Whereas 'tis ſaid that friendſhip is a benevolence mutually known, all that will be requiſite upon this head is, that the perſons who are to be confederated in this union, have ſuch opportunities of converſe or correſpondence, that they may be ſatisfy'd of the degree and reality of each others love.

6. Having thus ſtated the idea of friendſhip, and from thence deduced all the neceſſary qualifications in the ſubject for its entertainment, I think I may now from the premiſſes, venture to affirm, that there

may

may be ſtrict friendſhip between man and wife. For, which of theſe requiſites is it that they muſt neceſſarily want? As for your objection taken from their inequality, I grant equality is wanting both as to ſex, and as to conjugal relation; but neither is all equality neceſſary. 'Tis not abſolutely neceſſary that friends ſhould ſtand upon a level, either in reſpect of fortune, ſtate or condition. This ſort of equality, I grant, is a good preparative for a more eaſie introduction of friendſhip; and 'tis alſo advantageous to the laſtingneſs of it; but yet 'tis diſpenſable. 'Tis like levelling the ground betwixt two rivers, it makes way for a more eaſie union; but yet 'tis poſſible from earthquakes, floods, or other contingencies, they may be united without it. The only equality that is neceſſary, is an equality of diſpoſitions, an harmony of affections; but this may be in perſons of unequal fortunes and conditions. I confeſs, there can be no ſuch thing as friendſhip between perſons of different quality, if the ſuperior takes advantage of his preheminence or authority: for then 'tis true what the Poet ſays, *Si vis Sexte coli, non amabo.*

7. But then 'tis not the being inveſted with ſuperiority that is inconſiſtent with friendſhip, (for then Kings, who have no equals but thoſe of other Kingdoms, with whom they cannot intimately converſe, would be the miſerableſt creatures alive) but the habitual uſe and exerciſe of it, and the ſtanding upon its privileges.

8. But there is no neceſſity that it ſhould be ſo. Friendſhip may level thoſe whom fortune has made unequal; and the greateſt monarch in the world may find opportunities to deſcend from the throne of majeſty to the familiar careſſes of a dear favourite; and unking himſelf a while for the more glo-

rious

tious title of friend. 'Tis but to apply this to the particular caſe in hand, and you have a ſolution to your queſtion. And now, Sir, from the theory of friendſhip, I ſhall moſt readily deſcend to the practice of it, whenever you pleaſe to employ the ſervice of

(Dear Sir)

Your moſt real Friend and Servant

J. NORRIS.

The Extract of a Letter written upon the occaſion of the Death of a Friend.

I Conſider firſt, that grief (unleſs it be for our ſins) is the moſt abſurd and ſenſeleſs of all the paſſions, yea, of all the things in the world, and utterly unbecoming a creature that makes the leaſt pretenſion to reaſon. Becauſe 'tis reſolvable into no rational principle; for whatever is ſo, muſt be, or at leaſt appear to be either an end or a means: But this can pretend to neither. Not to be an end, for nothing is ſo but what is good; but this is in no reſpect good, and in many reſpects evil. Not to be a means, becauſe it affects nothing, but is altogether vain and fruitleſs. And indeed it cannot but be ſo, becauſe 'tis of a thing paſt, which even to Omnipotence it ſelf is impoſſible to be alter'd. Our other paſſions are to ſome purpoſe, and aim at ſome end. Love, to enjoy; anger, to revenge; fear, to avoid; and the like: But this paſſion, grief, ſerves to no end or purpoſe in the world; and it cannot

cannot be its own end, becauſe (as I ſaid before) it is in no reſpect good. It is therefore utterly abſurd and unreaſonable.

Again I conſider, that ſuppoſe grief were not ſo vain and ineffective a thing as 'tis, but that it could make ſome alteration in things; yet it cannot alter any one event for the better; and therefore to what purpoſe ſhould I indulge it? For ſince we acknowledge a being of an infinite wiſdom, power and goodneſs to ſit at the helm of the univerſe, it muſt be conſequently acknowledg'd, that the courſe of this world is ſteer'd to the beſt advantage of the whole; and however ignorant we may be how to juſtifie particular *Phænomena's*, yet we muſt (if we will be conſiſtent with our former conceſſion) at leaſt implicitly believe that all things are as well as they can poſſibly be. Certain it is (whatever ſome malecontents may think) the world is govern'd with as much wiſdom as 'twas made; and as the natural world ſtood the teſt of the Divine Criticiſm, ſo will the moral one too. God upon review would pronounce this as good as he did the other, and why ſhould not we? Yea, we ſhould, if we could ſee the excellent *Drama* from end to end as he does: We ſhould then diſcern that all thoſe diſpenſations, which ſeparately taken, appear harſh and unequal, yet in concatenation and together conſpire to the beauty and intereſt of the whole. This will be our portion hereafter; in the mean time, 'twill be our greateſt wiſdom to truſt that of God, and believe that implicitly as to the thing, which we cannot diſcern as to the manner. And this I take to be the moſt rational foundation of reſignation and acquieſcence in the divine pleaſure, which is grounded upon a conſideration of his infinite wiſdom and goodneſs. When we reſolve our wills into his, merely

for this reaſon, becauſe we pay ſo much deference to his perfections, as to think, that if we knew as much as he, we ſhould not wiſh things to be otherwiſe than they are. And this is highly ſpecify'd in the Saints in Heaven, who through that near and intimate view which they have of God's perfections, are ſo entirely conformable to his will, that they can diſpenſe not only with the eternal loſs, but damnation of their friends, without the leaſt grief or reſentment. I confeſs, this eminency of reſignation is no more attainable in this life, than any other part of celeſtial happineſs; but yet an heedful and attentive meditation of this argument may do much towards it: And however difficult it be to reduce it to practice, yet 'tis moſt certain in the theory, that granting the ſuperintendency of an infinite and unprejudic'd underſtanding; and that every calamity is Συμφορὰ πλαὸς, ſent from God; to grieve at any misfortunes is to grieve that things are as they ſhould be. Which is, one would think, too abſurd for him to be guilty of who is defined to be a rational creature.

Again I conſider, that as that which I call an affliction is (as certainly as God is wiſe and good) for the beſt in reference to the whole ſyſtem of things; ſo for all that I know, it may be moſt conducive to my intereſt in particular. In as much, as by it I may either obtain a greater good, or avoid a greater evil. Thus a ſhipwrack made *Zeno* a philoſopher, and the meſſenger of Satan proved an antidote to the great Apoſtle againſt pride and vanity of ſpirit. And perhaps there was in me ſome evil and unmortify'd quality or other, of ſo malignant a nature, that it could not be cured by a leſs ſevere application. For certainly, God is not ſo ill a phyſician, as not to weigh the ingredients

dients of his bitter cup, before he mingles it into a draught, that it may be proportionable to the ſtrength of the diſeaſe, as well as of the patient.

Again I conſider, that as this affliction may be one of the arrows of love, and in the deſignation of God be intended for my particular good; ſo 'tis moſt certain, that by wiſe conduct I may extract good out of it if I will, and turn it to my greater advantage. We are in the world (ſays Biſhop *Taylor*) like men playing at tables; the chance is not in our power; but to play it is: And when it is fallen, we muſt manage it as we can, and let nothing trouble us, but when we do a baſe action, or ſpeak like a fool, or think wickedly. Indeed it is well ſaid; and yet as well as it is, there is room for ſome improvement: For the life of man may be aptly compared to a game at tables upon a farther conſideration. For as there, what caſt we ſhall have is not in our power; but to manage it well, that is in our power, as well as to chuſe whether we will play: So is it with man in the concerns and accidents of life. 'Twas not in my power whether this affliction ſhould befal me or not; but 'tis in my power to manage it for my advantage now it has befall'n me. I can uſe it as an opportunity of ſhewing my virtue, as an occaſion of withdrawing my affections from the world, conſidering the uncertainty of the beſt objects of it, of increaſing my love to God, and his love to me here, and his rewards to me hereafter. And to this purpoſe I conſider the ſtory of *Abraham*, who for his readineſs to part with his beloved ſon at the demand of God, became the favorite and friend of his Maker, and obtain'd this emphatical promiſe from him, *in bleſſing I will bleſs thee.*

Again I conſider, that although by the loſs of my friend, a great breach be made upon my happineſs, yet the remainder of what I enjoy is much greater than the evil which I ſuffer; ſo that upon the whole, the ſcale weighs down for happineſs. My condition is ſtill better than that of many others, who yet think themſelves happy. And therefore for me to pine and lament, becauſe I am not ſo happy as I was, or may be, becomes neither the philoſophy of a ſcholar, nor the humility of a chriſtian; and upon the ſame principle I may continue to lament even when I am in Heaven. Rather let me adore the bounty of God for filling my cup ſo full, than be diſcontented becauſe it does not run over.

Again I conſider with the great Apoſtle, that the time is ſhort, and that therefore I ſhould weep as if I wept not. The time indeed is ſhort, and yet we complain of its tedious length, deviſe arts to paſs it away, and ſpend and loſe it as if it would never be done. But it goes faſt enough of it ſelf, and we need not drive it, and it will not be long e'er it will go no more, but end all its motion in the fix'd point of eternity. The life we live, and the world we live in, will both ſhortly conclude in death and ruine: And 'twill not be long e'er we hope to enjoy the beatifick ſight of him, in knowledge of whom ſtands our eternal life, and (if after that the fruition of any creature can be of any moment) the ſociety even of our dear friends and relations. In the mean time, the hope of a better and more enduring ſubſtance in the life to come, ſhould deaden the ſenſe of preſent evils: and as proſperity ſhould not corrupt us, ſo neither ſhould adverſity ſink and diſpirit us. To which purpoſe, I have one artifice more whereby to ſolace my ſelf, and that is, by entertaining the ſame apprehenſion of

of what I enjoy, as I ſhould do if I did not enjoy it. Which I do by ſuppoſing the latter, and by repreſenting to my imagination the conſequence of that deprivement. I think with myſelf, how miſerable ſhould I be if I wanted ſeveral of thoſe bleſſings which I have, particularly, if I had not been bred a ſcholar, and thereby been qualified to be my own comforter. And by vertue of this conſideration, I ſet a higher value upon what I enjoy, and conſequently find the leſs miſs of what I do not.

This is my *conſolatio philoſophica*, whereby I allay and fix the fermentation of my paſſions. To which I might add many popular arguments, as that 'tis as natural to die as to be born; that 'tis incident not only to man, but to the whole creation, *the faſhion of this world paſſes away*; that 'tis envious to think that our loſs, which is our friend's gain; that occaſions of grief in this world are many, and therefore not ſingly to be much lamented; that 'tis a ſhame for reaſon not to be able to conquer that which muſt at length yield to time, and the like. But theſe I ſhall be content only to mention, partly becauſe I don't fancy much to be topical, and partly becauſe I think my other ſupports ſtrong enough to bear the ſtreſs of the moſt weighty ſorrow.

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